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INDIA'S NATIONAL PAN-GENRE MUSIC MAGAZINE

the Score magazine

Quirks & Queries

NUSH LEWIS

Who talks to us about her latest EP "Bridges", her songwriting process and more.

Studio Tour

FERRIS WHEEL STUDIOS

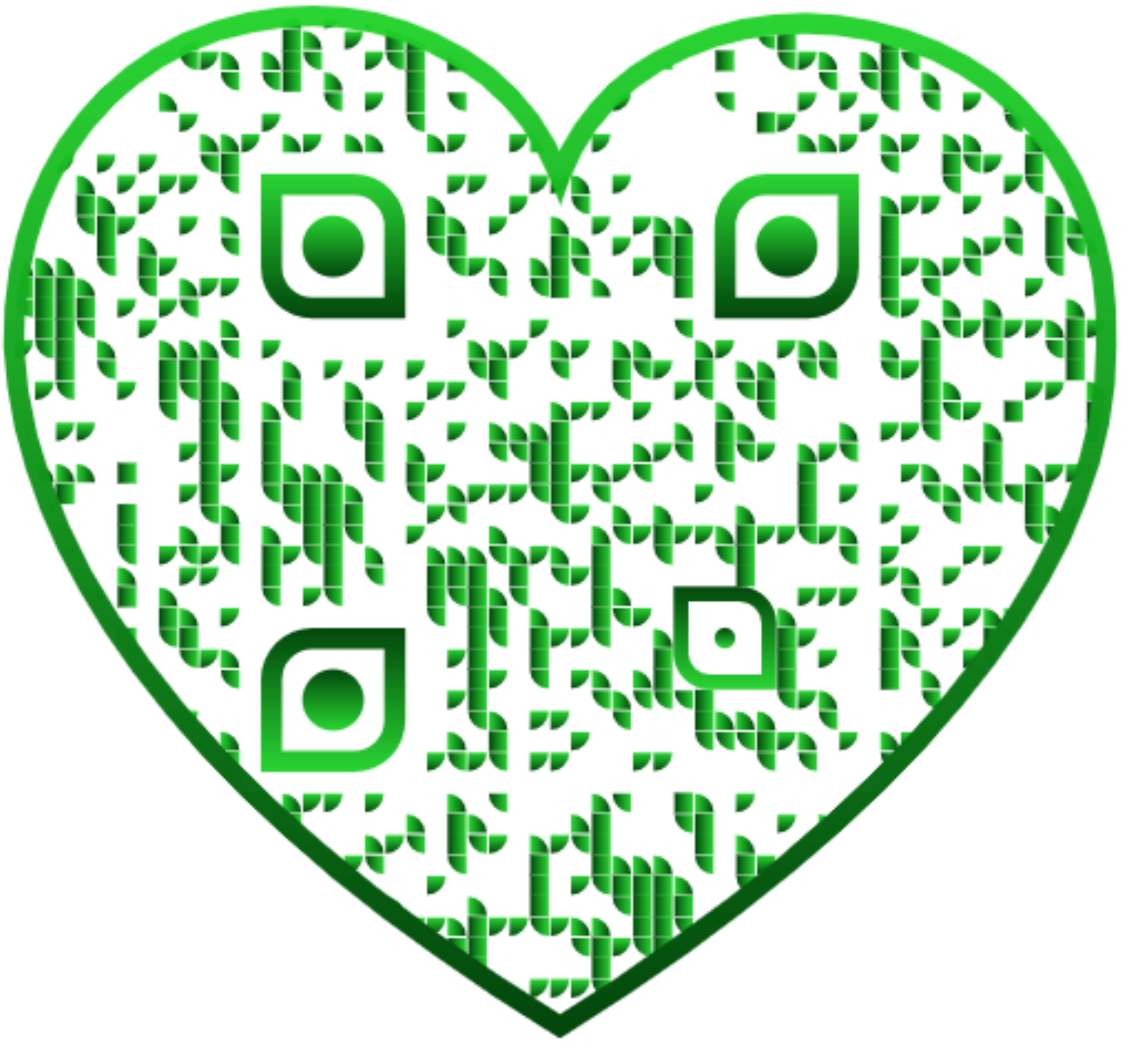
A glimpse into what equipment, gear and recordings happen at this amazing studio in Gurgaon.

Cover Story

GURU RANDHAWA

In conversation with The 'High Rated Gabru'

Also inside: 10 tips to help you with scale practice, Sounds of a human body, Iconic concert venues in India and more



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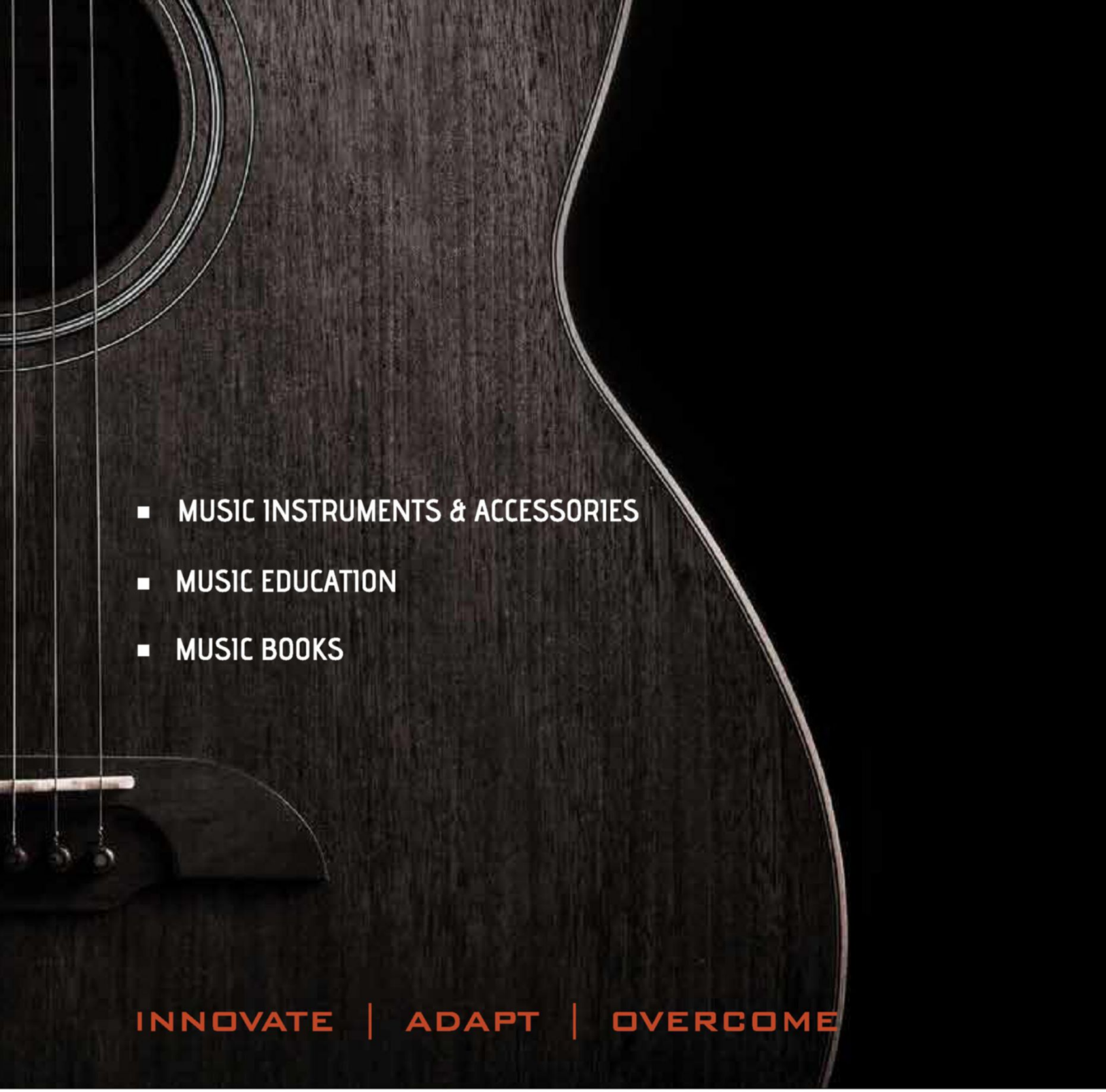

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GAJENDRA PURI GOSWAMI

GURU RANDHAWA

The 'High Rated Gabru' Guru Randhawa became the talk of town after a few smashing hit songs. All of 27 years of age, this precocious artist has taken the Bollywood industry by storm! One of the popular independent singers, who have had significant number of songs to his credit, is Guru Randhawa.

In an interview with us, he spoke about his musical path, inspiration, his collaboration with Pitbull, how he uses technology to reach his fans and a lot more.

Who were your early music inspirations and who amongst them inspired your music the most?

It all began for me with listening to songs on TV and singing it at an early age. Since, I used to stay close to India-Pak border, I used to listen to artist like Gurdass Mann, Babbu Mann from Punjab and legends from Pakistan like Sajjad Ali, Abrarul- Haq, etc. These were my initial inspirations and developed my interest to be in front of camera and on stage.

How did you get into music? Do you remember the exact moment when you know or did you realise gradually?

So, I come from Gurdaspur, Punjab which is 4 km from Indo-Pak border. Coming from this small village, the satellite used to catch regional channels along with DD national and others. I used to listen to old folk and pop music that used to come on TV then. I remember, if we moved the antenna of radio on one side, so we used to hear Punjabi legendary artist like Babbu Mann, Gurdass Mann. Moving the antenna on other side we could hear Pakistani artist like Sajjad Ali, Abrarul- Haq, etc so we had best of both worlds. I always had to dream to come on TV and by god's grace I was able to achieve that. My early struggles were just like any other kid in village and while growing up I decided to follow my passion of music. My parents were always supportive of me and did everything in their capacity to support us. Being from a village, definitely we had limited sources but I always believed in my music. I never gave up and kept doing what I love. Even the songs that you hear now mostly were written back then. I feel, this was not a struggle. It was my journey and God has always been by my side. It was a lot of hard work, but if you keep working hard and respect your parents, things fall into place eventually

What is your writing and composing process?

So the artist I used hear that time on TV or radio used to compose write and sing their own songs. As a kid I thought, that is how it is be done. I write and compose music taking inspiration from everyday lives so that the audience can easily connect with the essence of the music that is being portrayed. I always try to keep my songs very easy with lyrics and catchy/young composition. There is no fixed process, it just comes to my mind and I take note of it. It can be in car, on flight or in studio, anywhere. Sometimes the hook comes and then I work on the later part. After

Popular Songs

- Suit Suit- Hindi Medium
- Lagadi Hai Thaay- Simran
- Ban Ja Rani- Tumhari Sullu
- Kaun Nachdi- Sonu Ke Titu Ki Sweety
- Patola- Blackmail
- High rated Gabru- Nawabzaade

writing is done, composition comes naturally and then we go to studio to record it. with independent music, I can do what I feel satisfied with, and not feel the pressure of what others expect me to deliver.

You're one of the most watched singers (globally) on Youtube. Has any of that outreach permeated into any countries that you did not expect it would reach?

Absolutely, the music industry has added a lot of volume to my career. It has helped me and reach parts of world which I didn't knew existed. It is a new experience and I am getting to learn something new every day. It feels top of the world to see people from all around the world dancing to my songs. God has made it all work.

How do you think technology plays a role in today's world especially in the music industry? How do you leverage it to reach out to your target audience?

I think technology plays a vital role in any artist's life. Back in those days, there were very few mediums and the options were limited. Today, an artist can directly upload video/song on Youtube and other streaming sites/apps and can easily reach out audience. Nowadays, people have started following music more seriously. They can directly connect with artist on social media and stay constantly updated about artist whereabouts. It has definitely opened new avenues that didn't exist before.

At the end of the day, all the mediums generate revenue and the number of downloads for a song do matter for an artist.

How was the music scene in Punjab when you were coming up? Was music appreciated in households or was it more of an individual pursuit?

Honestly, the Punjabi music scene has been vibrant ever since with artist Gurdass Mann, Babbu Mann, Surtaj Singh and may more. I was exposed to music with TV and radio so definitely it was a household scene. In today's day and time, it has expanded beyond measure and I am glad so many good talents are coming out from Punjab.

Does the presence of prolific singers like Gurdaas Maan give the local scene in Punjab any buoyancy?

Yes, absolutely, they are legendary singers and will be remembered for their always.

You've said that you enjoy performing at weddings. Do you feel that they give you a more intimate space to meet the fans and do concerts feel any different?

Yes, performing at wedding is fun as it is a small intimate close affair. But in comparison to concerts, I love singing for my fans who take out time from their hectic schedule to attend my concerts. Performing for my live is the best feeling. When the audience resonates with my music and sings every single word from the song. the high of performing live is unmatched, the thrill, the love, the energy all makes it an unforgettable experience.

Did you experience any difference in the process of working for a Bollywood project in comparison with the scene back home and (now) with international artists? If yes, what?

Well, I feel Independent single have an aura of their own and no pressure for the artist in terms of creativity. For instance, before my song 'Suit Suit' was dropped in 'Hindi Medium' movie, it was already reached about 100 million plus views on Youtube. The people who made me reach these numbers like my fan base, subscribers, followers they all pushed the song even further to reach where it is today. This is the magic of Independent music. That's why all true artist enjoy making Independent singles as you can give a part of you to the music. It is a different process to create music for films. I need to know what the film is about and the scene for which I am composing the song. Understanding the mood of the film is also important and there are inputs from directors, producers to keep in mind as well.

Tell us about your favorite Gear and why do you like them?

I recently purchased a Grand Piano for my new home and I;m so excited to play it.

How was the experience of working with Pitbull? Why did he become the choice for your first international project?

It was great working with Pitbull sir and dream come true collaboration. I always wanted to represent my village, my state and my country at international level, so this opportunity was one step towards that representation. I feel, as an artiste, it's my responsibility to diversify my music and spread the beauty of my culture. It was awesome working with him and the song has turned out really good. His contribution on the song added a magical spin that gave it an International twist. It was huge step ahead in going global and this collaboration set Indian music on global map. I would love to explore more collaborations in future.

Would you ever consider singing a song for a different language then Hindi and Punjabi to permeate other industries?

If something interesting comes my way in any language, why not.

When did you think an artist becomes successful? When do you think it happened in your story?

It is an ongoing process always. So to say, when people sing your songs and really enjoy it greatest gift for an artist. The love I receive from my fans and the happiness in eyes of my parents it is my biggest achievement.

What do you consider yourself first - lyricist, writer, singer or composer?

I think all three are part of the process, each is important to complete a song.

You have been signed by T-Series for a long time now. How did the collaboration come about? How much has it evolved?

The label heard my independent songs and approached us to place it in movies. They are like family to me. I'm thankful to Bhushan sir for all his support, it wouldn't have been possible without the hard working team at T-Series. With support of our fans and well-wishers, we have been able to achieve our milestones till now and many more to come.

Do you have any forthcoming projects? Could you tell us something about them?

Currently, I'm doing a tour and receiving a lot of love for slowly slowly. I have few Bollywood songs coming in movies like Arjun Patiala, Dream Girl and few more. I have a new single releasing very soon, you will hear about it soon. We have tried something new with this single.

What are some of the platforms you listen to music on and why do you like them?

Youtube, Itunes

If there is something you'd like to change about the music industry, what would it be and why?

The amount of talent emerging from our country is incredible. It's a good phase for Hindi Music industry with rising of independent singles too. I wouldn't want to change anything when it comes to music. Everything is good. Even when u do not understand language of a singer you would listen to the music and make your own version of song and groove to it. Anyone can connect to good music, that is its power

How would you describe your sound to someone to has never heard you?

Young and vibrant

Name some music composers you'd love to work with

AR Rahman, Bruno Mars

Your message to our readers

Do your hard work and you can achieve your goal if you do same thing 10,000 times and just focus on your work. God has a plan and right time to make things work. Just believe in your art and respect your parents

Quirks & Queries

NUSH LEWIS

Picture Credit- Prashin Jagger

Tell us about your song writing process.
I am a very moody writer. That's actually something I'm trying to break. I now force myself to sit with something even though I may not necessarily feel it. My process is pretty simple and straightforward. I write down a progression and loop it. I then sing various melody lines over it till I get one that fits better. Lyrics come in as and when it pleases.

Tell us about your initial years when you first started out as a musician.
I decided to get into music professionally in 2009 when I graduated from college. It was one of those "if I don't do this now, I'm never going to do it" and that's a regret I wasn't ready to live with. I did my one year of performance program at the KM Music Conservatory majoring in the harp in Chennai and then moved to Mumbai. Mumbai is an absolute crazy city to live in but the beauty of it is that no one feels out of place. What I loved was the fact that like me there were many other young singer songwriters who had the same drive and thirst to write and produce music. I, of course, walked into this scene knowing absolutely no one. So while I wrote my music I attended a bunch of gigs and creepily stood in the corner and watched. This is where I made contacts and slowly people got to know who I am. Twitter was how I booked my first ever collaboration and my first ever gig. That was our only social media back then so I made the most of it.

You are also a harpist. How did you decide to pick that up? What inspired you?
Never in my wildest dreams did I ever think I would end up playing the harp. When I joined the KM Conservatory in 2009 as a vocal major was where I actually saw the harp being played. Our music theory teacher Alison Maggart was a harpist and she had performed the harp for a school function. That was the first time I ever saw the harp being played. As much as it was the music and the magnificence of the instrument that is overwhelming, what actually drew me to the instrument was curiosity. It has so many strings and on top of that it has pedals that move in three layers. That's what got me to go and ask for classes. With no intention of taking it further than two classes. But that's when I found myself going back for more. I ended up practicing the harp more than my vocals and the rest is history. I changed majors with the help of my teacher and things have been different ever since.

For a person who has never listened to the EP 'Bridges', how would you describe it?
"Bridges" is a body work that represents an artist's personal growth moving against all odds and self discovery. It has been about two years in the making in terms of writing and rewriting. Sonically, it was driven by the piano as opposed to the last EP. The storytelling in the songs opened up a more harmonic spectrum because of it. The usage of live drums and bass has also played a big role in the making of the EP. 'Travel' tells a story of unachievable love, 'Lament' is a grandmother's journey through life, 'Untuned' leaping into freedom and embracing it, 'Threads' is about the lies we surround ourselves with and 'Distance' is about an alternate universe we would like to escape to. Of the five songs, two are collaborations with producers. 'Threads' is a collaboration with Italian producer, Luca Petracca. And 'Distance' is a collaboration with ambient artist, Riatsu.

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Artist of the Month

Sive Baskaran a.k.a

NATIVE INDIAN

Why the name Native Indian?

The name "Native Indian" points towards sensibilities that are native to the people who have grown up in this Indian landscape. A kind of conditioning that is unique to the people who have lived in this environment. When this project started out, this vision was quite nascent and my efforts were just to have a subliminal touch on things that are characteristically Indian. Things that would be relatable to someone who has grown up in an Indian household but at the same time not be alien to someone who is not. In fact, my aim was for it to act as a gateway for someone outside to have a view at the smaller details of this Indian landscape, its ideologies, its evolution etc. As the elements of the music, the stories and narratives came together, the purpose of the name revealed itself more evidently.

What are some of the gear you use and why do you like them?

The two most important piece of gear without which I would not be able to perform are

1. The Native Instruments Maschine MKIII controller - because it also acts as a soundcard and with my laptop only having two USB slots, It saves me to have the Maschine that runs my synths and loops and also acts as a soundcard.

2. The TC helicon Voice Live Touch 2 - All the different voices in the album were recorded directly using the effects in the voice effects unit. I printed my vocals with the voice modulations directly because that's how much I was sure that those were the exact effects and modulations I wanted. This also helps me recreate those same voice effects and modulations live as well.

You are a Native instruments artist. Which are your favorite products of theirs and why?

The Native Instruments Maschine is my favourite product, simply because I grew up using it over the last 6-7 years and right from the beginning, it has been my go-to tool for composing. I've adapted well to it and I have my own workflow with it. In fact, in the months to come, I will be making a separate series of video content to showcase my work flow with the Maschine using some tracks for the album as examples. I have also heard amazing things about the Traktor series but that product line is more for DJ-ing while the Maschine is more of a composition and production tool.

Tell us about your upcoming projects

The upcoming content is still in works. Anything I say now is likely to change in the future. But at the outset, I hope to create a cross-medium audio visual story. There are lot of underlying narratives of the recently released album that will add more context to the music itself but is yet to released/ revealed. I have been speaking of these narratives in live performances but I have not digitally released these stories yet. So at the moment, I am keen on developing a digital comic series that portrays the stories in the album visually. #Lookingforcollaborators . I see "Native Indian" as a developing story line that will augment various mediums of expression and become a fictional universe of its own. In the first album "Vol 1: Nature of the Self" , we saw a God-like creature traveling back in time to understand it's roots and where it's genetic conditioning comes from. Incidentally, this takes the being (and the listener) on a journey through time to various ancestors who have lived in our Indian environment and the systems that governed those periods of time.

MEGHAN KHARSYNRAP

Borrowing tunes from Bollywood RIGHT OR WRONG?

When Indian Grammy Award winner A. R. Rahman tweeted about his collaboration with William Adams (will.i.am) in 2014 for the song 'It's my birthday,' it was reminiscent of a greater musical dialogue. Although Adam's sampling of A. R. Rahman's "Urvasi Urvasi" from the 1994 movie "Kadhalan" was done legally, it brought to light the kind of music-borrowing-culture that exists today and that has become rampant because of the internet. But Adam's definitely didn't start this music trend. This culture called 'sampling' originates from the 80's. How it works is a musician would essentially borrow snippets like a melody or beat from a particular song and remodel it to make something else. You could think of it as a collage of music snippets. Some songs are so influential they've been sampled over a 1000 times like "Funky Drummer" by James Brown. But then the question arises that if the remodeled song sounds way different from the actual song that was sampled, can we still think of it as original? Can we consider it theft of intellectual property? And what about creativity?

It's no surprise that several classics from Bollywood have been sampled to make hits. In the past, musical cultures borrowed from each other often, but we had no idea that a song we listened to could have originated from somewhere else. Consider how Pritam's 'Pehli Nazar Mein' sung by Atif Aslam was actually sampled from Korean song "Sarang Hae Yo" by Kim Hyung Sup. Today, the web exposes us to different music and exposes us to the borrowed tunes as well.

Some popular examples of sampled Bollywood songs would be "What's Happenin" by Method Man feat. Busta Rhymes that sampled "Dum Maro Dum" by Asha Bhosle; "Toxic" by Britney Spears also contains a sample from "Tere Mere Beech Mein" by Lata Mangeshkar; Black Eyed Peas is famous for sampling Bollywood with "Elephunk Theme", "My Humps" and "Don't Phunk with My Heart" and many others.

But there's been a fair share of drama when it comes to sampling.

One of the most notorious sampling related issues is DJ Quik's song "So Addictive" for Dr. Dre's female mentee Shari Watson featuring Rakim that sampled Bappi Lahiri's "Thoda Resham Lagta Hai". It even made the list on COMPLEX's '25 Most Notorious Uncleared Samples In Rap History'. The song was Shari Watson's (professionally known as 'Truth Hurts') debut single. The sample was not cleared when it was used, resulting in Saregama's $500 million lawsuit against Universal Music Group, Interscope Records and Aftermath Entertainment in 2002.

Today, sampling is mainstream culture because production tools are easily accessible in digitized form. This means anybody could potentially be a producer. But if famous musicians fail to abide by the law when it comes to sample clearances, it isn't hard to imagine the extent of sampling related crimes all over the world. The procedure of obtaining clearance is also difficult. If you want to borrow music and sample it legally you have to obtain a license from the copyright holder. There are two licences you need to obtain: you need to get a license from the record label for the sound recording and also from the music publisher for the melody or lyrics. The Indian Copyright Act 1957 protects expressions of ideas rather than the ideas themselves. If interpreted in one way it really broadens the horizon for what can be sampled.

Sampling can mean different things for different people. Courts all over the world consider nature (commerciality) , sustainability, purpose and marketability when determining whether art has been appropriated illegally. When an artist is earning HUGE figures from sampling a part of your home made piece without credit, you'd definitely want to reconsider the morality of sampling.

SHREYA BOSE

Indie Reviews

Hummingbird (Tamish Pulappadi): A 15 year old is obsessed with Guns N' Roses, and spends his days covering Jimi Hendrix, Steve Vai, Joe Satriani, Slash, Kirk Hammet, and Steve Harris. He has been inducted into the Brotherhood of the Guitar, an effort initiated by famed photographer Robert Knight (one of the first professionals of his kind to photograph Hendrix) to identify young talent across the globe. He is also brand ambassador of Ernie Ball Music Man.

At 15.

This Begaluru wunderkind has a Facebook page is strewn with expertly crafted covers, and he has only recently ventured into fermenting original creations. The first of them is Hummingbird, a guitar-god paratrooper that is a delicious slop of Joe Sat-Steve Vai topped with Mamsteem bacon bits. While technical precision is obvious and in excess, the beginnings of his powerful, youthful sentiment also seep through.

The music is exuberant, bursting with possibility. The musician is joyful, bristling with the splendour of his own ability. He is reverent, and one can hope, on the verge of becoming wildly experimental. He moves from note to chord to arpeggio with such delight that you cannot resist becoming delighted yourself. This one is a happymaker, and spreads some awe along the way.

Everything is Play (Groovemeister): An impressive debut has occurred. A quintet rumbles around in recording studios and their own dreams, spinning pleasant but hurried stories out of sound.

The Groovemeister sound is sprightly. It fits right into the frenzy of a good old jazz club, and lapses just as effortlessly into the debonair charm of funk. One mustn't miss that it took four years for the band to create a sonic aesthetic they liked for themselves. The particular exhilaration that marks every debut is unmistakable, though they do have moments of ominosity that disappear as quickly as they bubble up.

The band describes the album as reflective of their formative years, which explains some of the rough edges you might encounter. Songs like It's A Boy! and Little Kicks are rollicking, carnivalesque affairs, created by men who could not be more enthralled by what they are doing. Every song is a refined rampage of joy and wonder. "Try something new!" say these four instrumental odes to living without hesitation.

When listened to at a stretch, one does risk sinking into a little bit of monotony, especially when transitioning between It's A Boy and Wayfarer. But there is no getting away from the unembellished gusto with which the music plays - tailored for celebration of all things living and all things life.

Fallin' (ICONYK & UpsideDown): Your run of the mill pop fabrication with a few decent beats. If Billboard pop is your genre, this will feature on your list a couple of times. More, if you prefer to jig lightly in your car seat on your way to work.

The song scrapes by the shores of reggaeton and moombahton, but does not do enough to be identified with either genre. While it does not manage to be memorable, it reminds of the urban Asian lashings of Jay Sean and his musical kin. Clubgoers and casual listener will have no reason to complain.

Post Modern Holocaust (Colorblind): In literary, historical and philosophical academia, the term post-modrn evokes multiple, often conflicted reactions. Is it a term with any real meaning? Does it denote a style, a genre, a mode of criticism, a mindset? Does it simply call for a change in consciousness that no one can pin down with a worthwhile definition?

As a genre, post-rock fits right into the milieu of postmodern art. It defies and dances around most definition, and you judge it by the feelings it generates rather that the artistic parameters it follows to come to life.

Most often, it is hard to talk about postmodernism without weighing yourself down with jargon and alienating your audience. When Pune-based composer-guitarist Kartik Mishra AKA Colorblind used the word to name his album, he might have wanted to confuse the discerning listener. However, despite the strangeness of nomenclature, what he composes does not feel alien. Quite the opposite.

How does one criticise songs with disconcerting names and no lyrics? What do you think of when you read Angels on the Electric Chair or A Lazy Man Who Can't Find His Words? Do you think of aesthetic dystopia in the likes of Blade Runner? Do you concoct stories in your head which explain angelic presence in a seat of death? Or do you just figure that it's a cool name and replay the song?

All of Mishra's compositions on the album play like they hold great stories. The album moves from eerie anticipation (what you get when you see a silent corridor in an old film) to great waves of musical excess. But no matter how elaborate, something like Human, All Too Human makes you wonder about it's driving inspiration - what was Mishra thinking about when he created it?

The signature sound is textured with crunchy, gravelly guitars, underlaid by an unobtrusive-but-always-audible drone and heavily dependent on sweeping, ambient tones. It is a big sound, but carefully includes the nuance that gives post-rock it's grounds for success. Like all good examples of the genre, it is effortlessly simple to drown yourself into the album for hours. As much as it hides its own stories, it gives you song after song to serve as soundtracks to your own. Try the almost militaristic drums of Pier Paolo, and imagine for yourself a parade that fits right in.

It must be noted that Mishra does not use the term postmodern in vain or for half-baked hipsterism. In Banal, he samples the voice and words of Tristan Tzara, a Romanian avant-garde poet and artist credited for being a founder of the anti-Establishment Dada movement - one of the prime examples of postmodernist artistic liberation.

Echoing beneath the drone in Banal are Tzara's words " ...in principle, I am against manifestos as I am also against principles...". As he lays bare the perturbing contradictions that Dadaism was known for, you invite confusion into your mind. Pay heed to the words, accentuated by the metallic, clinical drone that is perfect accompaniment for uncomfortable revelations such as:

" I speak only for myself, since I do not wish to convince. I have no right to drag others into my river. I am against action, for continuous contradiction, for affirmation too I am neither for nor against. And I do not explain as I hate common sense.

Some people think they can explain rationally by thought what they think, but that is extremely relative. Psychoanalysis is a dangerous disease ..."

Follow the entire speech, and for this song alone, you will know where it's title came from.

This weird analysis of otherwise accepted definitions is at the heart of the Dadaist movement, and indeed of postmodernism itself. One can surmise that Mishra might be functioning with a similar intent. Or perhaps, he is simply fascinated by a train of thought, and he played some music inspired by the form.

Either way, the music is deeply appealing, and is certainly capable of causing curiosity. As far as artistic accomplishments go, is that not quite enough?

KARISHMA D'MELLO

ETYMOLOGICAL ROOTS

EXPLORING THE STORIES BEHIND INDIE BAND NAMES

Choosing a name is choosing what kind of impression you leave on every potential listener. If you do things right, people will listen to you just because your name struck a chord with them, even before your music could. This name, (if all goes well), will find itself tattooed across die-hard fans, plastered across bedroom walls and grow to represent the band for all of eternity, or (in a less climactic turn of events), until you change it.

Sometimes bands find the right name after deliberating and debating among themselves for months. Other times, it's a flash of inspiration. Occasionally, it's a reminder that you should perhaps lay off the alcohol for a bit.

Nevertheless, where there's a name, there's a reason and if there's a reason there's got to be a story. And yes, we'll be playing fast and loose with the word "story", when the reason is "we couldn't think of anything else."

In my quest for anecdotal charm, I've looked through the etymologies of India's indie bands, and have since then discovered the stories behind some of their names.

The Riot Peddlers, Mumbai

Any punk rocker worth their salt knows the importance of standing up to "the system." Inspired by the news of 2010, The Riot Peddlers opted for a name that they intended to represent the raw, unadulterated fervor expressed in their music. 'Cause what's more punk rock than a good old protest against...anything?

Unohu, Mumbai

Imagine you're at a concert and the next band announced on stage is "You know who". Does that sound fun? Unohu thought so too.

Blood Brothers, Ahmedabad

While it's fairly easy to deduce that this band is clearly an Iron Maiden fan, they add that along with the reference to Maiden's song, it follows a much wider interpretation. "Music unites people of all races, countries, and ages. So, anyone who's got anything to do with music - we're all blood brothers." The band also adds that since two of the members are actual brothers, they felt like the name did them justice in every regard.

Clown with a Frown, Bangalore

Miroslav Holub, a Czech poet once wrote a poem "Clowns", an unrhyming narrative that follows a general questioning of what clowns do when they're not making people laugh. Inspired by the somewhat sad implications in the poem, the band says their music, similarly references grim subjects through happy music.

The Lightyears Explode, Mumbai

This punk/ alternative band started off as "The Lightyears", inspired by Toy Story's Buzz Lightyear. After discovering that the name was already in use by an English band, they eventually chose to add the word "explode", in reference to the upbeat, raw energy expressed in their music.

The Family Cheese, Ahmedabad

Some decisions are unanimous, some take compromise. This particular decision reflected the latter. The band started off nameless in 2011, however, the drummer having observed prevailing negativity within indie band names, decided to opt for "The Family Cheese" as something that was "liberating for the band and the listener."

Imphal Talkies and the Howlers, Manipur

The Imphal Talkies and The Howlers were named after a theater (Imphal Talkies), near Kangla Fort in Manipal. This theater used to screen adult films during an exceptionally conservative era. Akhu Chingangbam, says they adopted the name to reference their rebellious music.

Goddess Gagged, Mumbai

For anyone familiar with the prog rock scene, there's no hidden meaning behind the choice of this name. Being longtime fans of Canada's Protest the Hero, they chose to name themselves after the band's song "Goddess Gagged".

Fun fact, Protest the Hero used to be called Happy go Lucky.

Iconic Concert Venues in India

ADITI SARAWAGI

There is something about live music shows which cannot be matched with even with the best music systems in the world. The energy and the vibe of not only the artist but thousands of fans create an unmatched experience. Not to forget the thrill of seeing one's favourite artist live and exclusive in front of your eyes. Apart from the musicians, the music and the fans, there is another component which can add that much more depth to a performance-the concert venue. In recent times, India has hosted a slew of live shows being performed across the country by indie musicians, national as well as by international artists. Starting this month, in a two-part series, the focus will be on music venues-iconic as well as the new age venues.

National Centre for Performing Arts, Mumbai

Inaugurated in 1969, NCPA, Mumbai, is one of India's premiere cultural institutions. It is considered to be one of the city's first live music spaces and is known to host everything from western classical music, Indian classical music to even indie bands. Located at Nariman Point, NCPA has played host to music maestros like Zakir Hussain, Shivkumar Sharma, Zubin Mehta and even new age artists like Dualist Inquiry. It also hosts quite a few music festivals throughout the year and the musical experience here is fantastic.

Mehboob Studios, Mumbai

Mehboob Studios is nothing short of an iconic venue. Founded in 1954 by Mehboob Khan, they have been hosting live performances from 2010. 'Live from the Console' is an event hosted twice a month on Saturdays by Sony Music where several Indian bands perform. They have hosted an assortment of indie talent including electro-pop-rock quartet Sky Rabbit, progressive band Goddess Gagged and gypsy punk group Peter Cat Recording Co.

Asiatic Society Library Steps, Mumbai

The stairs of the heritage structure-Asiatic Society, often turns into an iconic performance venue to host the Kala Ghoda Arts Festival and the Mumbai Sanskruti festival of Hindustani classical music. The stretch of road in front of the library is also closed off to make space for a stage and this ethereal venue has seen the likes of Sonu Nigam and even Shivkumar Sharma performing.

Shanmukhananda Auditorium, Mumbai

Mumbai's Shanmukhananda Auditorium is more than sixty years old and is the city's largest auditorium with a seating capacity of 2,763 spread over three floors. It is a popular venue for Carnatic music. Master percussionist Trilok Gurtu and Grammy-winning mohan veena player Vishwa Mohan Bhatt have staged performances here. This auditorium is also the venue for the annual concert organised by Zakir Hussain in memory of his father Allah Rakha Khan-an event featuring the world's finest musicians.

Shillong International Center of Performing Arts and Culture

Scheduled to open this year, Shillong International Center of Performing Arts and Culture or SIPAC is going to be India's largest concert hall with state-of-the-art facilities and is designed by Icelandic artist and architect Guðjón Bjarnason. With an indoor seating of two thousand guests and an outdoor theatre for twenty thousand people, SIPAC will serve as a cultural centre for the whole country.

These are just a few of the iconic auditoriums in the country. There are plenty more like the Sir Mutha Venkatasubba Rao Concert Hall in Chennai which has hosted the German Film Orchestra Babelsberg; the Netaji Indoor Stadium in Kolkata, Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium in Delhi; Jio Gardens in Mumbai which hosted Coldplay and Ed Sheeran and innumerable memorable locations, each with its own uniqueness and brilliant set of artist performances. In the next and final part to this series, we shall cover the new age venues which have taken performance and live acts to the next level.

In conversation with Indie Hindi rock band स्पंक

How did the name SPUNK come about? Tell us your story?

We started playing music right from our school days in pursuit of chasing our dreams to become the best rock band in the world. We were called Cynical Recess at that juncture playing English original music. It was 2011, when we decided that we wanted to pursue music full time. Keeping in mind, the Indian society banks on a stable job and security, it was a really tough call. It was a regular evening when we were randomly jamming old Bollywood classics with our brand of rock at Abhinandan's (drummer) house, which triggered a spark. There was something which made us believe that this can work out. What started out as a side project ultimately became our identity. On a concluding note, it takes a lot of courage for any middle class Indian boys to venture out full time to pursue music as a career. Hence, the name SPUNK!

Abhishek Chatterjee - Vocals/ Guitars

Abhinandan Mukherjee - Drums/ Vocals

Soumik Roy - Guitars

Rahul Maity - Bass

Manager/Booking Agency - Accombliss

How would you describe your music to a person who has never heard you?

"We don't sound like a regular Hindi rock band" We bring out our brand of rock in a very different way. Our influences are purely western and has been holding the roots right from our heydays. Although it is tough to fuse in our influences through Hindi vocal scansions and melody but we have worked out a genre which is mass catering. Over the years, we tried experimenting with old Bollywood classics , which of course was the launch pad that worked wonders. Presently we are writing our own material for our beloved fans. We are giving back to them this time around and the response has been pretty good so far. So we are excited.

Who are your major influences in the music space?

Oh loads of them. All four of us have varied music tastes at the same time it's all open and unbiased. Ranging from bands like Foo Fighters, Incubus, Periphery, Alter Bridge, Paramore to the Beatles, RD Burman and Kishore Kumar. We love them all.

Tell us about your instrument/ tech set up

For Guitars Abhishek and Soumik are currently using Gibson guitars along with fractal audio AX 8 effect boards.

For bass Rahul uses Marcus Miller clubbed with an analog pedal train.

Abhinandan uses Pearl Reference drums for live concerts and Mapex Saturn V for studio recordings clubbed with Zildjian K Dark custom brassware and Speed Cobra Pedals.

Back line consist of Fender Twin Reverb Amp for Abhishek, Marshall JCM 900 cabinets for Soumik and Ampeg SVT4 Pro for Rahul with Sennheiser In ear monitors.

Upcoming projects

Since our debut original "Talash" which featured a massive cross border colab with Pakistani Rock Stalwart Junaid Khan (Call) & Glitch Studio Bangladesh has raised the bar very high, the workflow is in full swing and we are releasing many new originals as well as covers from our camp in the next 5 months.

It would be anybody's dream to create music with your closest mates so yeah the times are exciting and we are pumped.

Rapid fire

Best performance till date

Well it's keeps changing, all our shows are special. Mood Indigo IIT Bombay And CET Trivandrum was one of our best gigs till date which got overshadowed by our recent show at IISER Mohali.

Venue you would love to play in

Red Rocks Amphitheater and Wembley Stadium would be a dream setting. In India it would be Palace Grounds, Bengaluru coz it has a lot of Indian rock history embedded.

NAVYA.C

GREATEST MONSOON RAGAS IN CARNATIC MUSIC

Nature and music has a deeper connection since primordial times. Right from rustle of leaves, to a swift breeze- if looked carefully, every sound of nature is musical and has a rhythm in itself. The varying hues of sky with clouds and the sunset also evokes musical melodies if perceived. Poets have linked the various shades of music even with changing seasons of the year. While spring speaks of bright and vibrant ragas like Shankarabharanam, winter would be linked with sober ragas like Purvi Kalyani! History has proven rightfully that singing a particular monsoon raaga can also trigger rain! Such incident happened when legendary composer Muttuswami Dikshitar sang the raaga Amrutavarshini leading to rainfall. When the composer sang Varshaya varshaya during a particular incident when the lands were struggling with no rainfall, the drizzle happened just through the rendition of Amruthavarshini!

Especially after a blazing phase of summer with sweltering heat and humidity, the first showers of monsoon is a welcome relief. There is nothing more soothing than grabbing a cup of filter coffee while witnessing the drizzle from a corner window of the house or a cozy balcony listening to a laid back aalapana of a Carnatic raaga! The first obvious monsoon raaga is Amruthavarshini which literally means the creator of nectar rain. Compositions like Aanandamruta Varshini can always be cherished by the music connoisseur. The modern composer Muttaiah Bhagavatar also composed Sudhamayi, a crisp kriti in the same raga. Ramapriya is another rare raga which is quite eloquent in creating the monsoon effect. Interestingly, Muttuswami Dikshitar composed Swaramyaham- one of the navagraha kritis under the honor of planet Rahu. The modern age composer Dr.M.Balamurali Krishna's varnam in Ramapriya is another fantastic composition not to miss.

Amrutha Behag created by legendary musician GNB is also greatly known for its monsoon melodious counterpart. The raaga Madhyamavati is conventionally used in Carnatic concerts during the conclusion but it is also known for monsoon feels. The Hindustani equivalents of Madhyamavati such as Madhumat Saarang, Brindavana Saarang and Shudh Saarang are also quite aesthetically beautiful in monsoon effect. These ragas have the feeling of ongoing dark clouds, rainy breeze and swift drizzle in mesmerizing manner. The experience of fresh waters from the sky falling onto the thirsty dried up ground is masterfully presented in these ragas.

Linking pristine nature to classical music actually brings out new perspectives towards melody and even the way life is led. The best of season can come in when it is liked with classical music and the nuances of raagas are also experienced greatly through doing this. Enjoy the renditions of these aforementioned raagas this rainy season and slowdown from the hustle bustle of urban life!

MUSKAN GOSWAMI

6 CONTEMPORARY LYRICISTS IN BOLLYWOOD

Over the years, Bollywood has seen some truly versatile and unique lyricists. These lyricists have successfully brought an eccentric flavor to the movies they were a part of. The songs that these lyricists weave are contemporary in nature and stay hooked in the mind for a long period of time. We have shortlisted 7 of the best contemporary lyricists in the industry. Have a look:

1. Irshad Kamil

An Urdu poet and lyricist, who initially wrote scripts for television soaps and later, wrote dialogues for movies. In 2004, the lyricist received his first big break as a Bollywood lyricist by writing for award-winning Chameli. The songs of the movie got popularized for its soulful and melodious lyrics. Irshad has written several heart-warming and award-winning lyrics.

Known for – Jab We Met (2007), Love Aaj Kal (2009), Rockstar (2011), Aashiqui 2 (2013), Highway (2014), and Tamasha (2015).

2. Varun Grover

An award-winning screenwriter and lyricist, who initially used to work as a software consultant. One of his first breaks in the industry was working as a staff writer for the TV show, The Great Indian Comedy Show. Other than writing unique lyrics, Varun is also acclaimed for script writing. He was the script writer for the National Film Award- winning Masaan (2015).

Known for – Gangs of Wasseypur: Part 1 & 2 (2012), Raman Raghav 2.0 (2016), and Udta Punjab (2016).

3. Tanveer Ghazi

Tanveer is a lyricist who has gained much popularity in a short span of time. Unlike other lyricists mentioned in the article, Ghazi has written songs for a handful of Bollywood movies only. Nevertheless, this lyricist writes in an immensely beautiful manner.

Known for – Pink (2016), Running Shaadi (2017), and October (2018).

4. Kausar Munir

Kausar is one among the many talented female lyricists in India. She is undeniably one of the most popular female lyricists in Bollywood. Kausar began her journey as a writer by writing dialogues for TV shows. It was the song Falak Tak, from the movie Tashan (2008), which immensely helped her in establishing a name in the male-dominant industry. Ever since then, Kausar has written various songs for famous Bollywood movies.

Known for – Ishaqzaade (2012), Main Tera Hero (2014) , Bajrangi Bhaijaan (2015), and Dear Zindagi (2016)

5. Amitabh Bhattacharya

A lyricist and a playback singer in Bollywood, Amitabh is among the most reputed contemporary lyricists of this generation. His first major break was the song Emotional Attyachar, for the movie Dev D (2009). After the success of this song, Amitabh became immensely popular and ever since then, he has written several classics such as Channa Mereya, Kabira, Mast Magan, Zehnaseeb, and Abhi Mujh Mein Kahin.

Known for – Band Baaja Baarat (2010), Delhi Belly (2011), Barfi! (2012), and Lootera (2013).

6. Prasoon Joshi

A Padma Shri awardee (2015) and two-time winner of the National Flim Award for Best Lyric, Prasoon is one of the best lyricists in Bollywood. The renowned lyricist was just 17 year old when he wrote his first book. Later, he worked in the field of advertising and delivered taglines for ad campaigns including, “Thanda Matlab Coca-Cola”. Prasoon currently is a well-appreciated lyricist and screenplay writer in Bollywood.

Known for –Black (2005), Fanaa (2006), Range De Basanti (2006), and Taare Zameen Par (2007).

KADAMBARI SRIVASTAVA

Nostalgic Notes :

When 'Hum Tum' went the 'Fanaa' way

Kunal Kohli may have started off with the starry debacle of Mujhse Dosti Karoge, but he eventually went on to win hearts with his stroke of brilliance at directing two brilliant Yash Raj romances; Hum Tum and Fanaa. Starring Rani Mukerji and Saif Ali Khan in the lead roles, Hum Tum reintroduced a charming Saif Ali Khan as the imperfect, boyish hero – a fresh respite from his earlier roles of a sidekick or supporting actor. That was the time when YRF was at its peak of churning out love sagas. Surely enough, two years after Hum Tum, the breezy unofficial remake of Hollywood's sweetheart When Harry Met Sally, Yash Raj gave us Fanaa, which too was directed by Kunal Kohli, and was based unofficially on Hollywood movie Eye of the Needle, based on the novel of the same name, by Ken Follet.

However, them being unofficial yet amazing adaptations directed by Kunal Kohli were not the only factors which bound Hum Tum and Fanaa. There is an interesting musical anecdote here as well, which connects these beautiful romances.

The music of Hum Tum and Fanaa both was composed by Jatin-Lalit, the duo who were behind the superhit romantic albums of almost every Yash Raj movie. Interestingly, Fanaa was their last movie together. Fanaa was beautiful in many ways; the debut of Aamir Khan and Kajol's beautiful chemistry, a tragic love arc, and Prasoon Joshi's lyrical phrases binding all of it, with Jatin-Lalit's music. Its theme still echoes into our hearts whenever we hear the movie's name. The theme of Fanaa was used as a whistle in Aamir's introductory song and later on as a full-fledged number Chanda Chamke. But wait. If you are a hardcore fan of Jatin-Lalit's albums it would sound familiar; and the connection would take you straight to the album of Hum Tum.

Yes, back in the days when cassettes existed and digital media was zilch and nada, we all craved for some crazy connections and felt amazing at having discovered something new. And that was the feeling which persisted when many pointed that the song Yaara Yaara in the Hum Tum album, which did not make it to the movie's final cut, was the tune used to bind Fanaa. The original version was sung by Alka Yagnik and Udit Narayan, and seems like it wasn't even filmed, for we never got to see a deleted video of it. Nevertheless, we found our newfound love of the tune two years later in Fanaa and loved it.

While many fans noticed it at that time itself, it was only on the tenth anniversary of Fanaa, that director Kunal Kohli chose to divulge the same officially. As he shared a lot of interesting trivia from the sets, he also stated that since they were not able to use Yaara Yaara, they thought of using the tune as a theme for Fanaa. Guess that worked out perfectly. The fans were not deluded, after all. We bet you'll be going back to both the albums now.

SOUVIK CHAKRABORTY

THE MUSIC OF MONSOON

The monsoons are known to be the catalysts for evoking the emotions and the passion within the deep down crevices of the human hearts.

The classical music of India has an innate and pure relationship with the monsoons of our land. While some of the rhythms are believed to have inspired the rain itself, some have been inspired by the rhythm of rain itself.

For eons the beauty around the clouds, rains and the wet soil has been the muse of numerous poets, from a Kalidasa of 5th Century to the classical singers of the Mughal era. The nectar in the rain has been the food for the thirsty soul of a musician.

Even the Holy Scriptures like the Rig Veda often contain verses in which prayers are offered to the Parjyana, or the God and harbinger of rain and nourishment. It is only fitting that the Hindustani classical music boasts of a rich and soul-stirring cluster of music called the Raga Malhar. This raga is like an invoking voice of the resounding thunderbolts in the sky coupled with the symphony of the raindrops falling on the dry and longing earth.

It is believed that, when Tansen had lit several lamps through his Raag Deepak, his daughter Saraswati sang the very famous Megh Malhar and brought the showers, which extinguished the flames that Tansen had manages to produce.

The variety of monsoon ragas that are chronicled in a book called 'Raga Malhar Darshan' amount to at least 30 in number. While the ragas like 'Mian ki Malhar' is associated with incessant rains, the ones like 'Surdasi Malhar' is for the end of the season, which largely reflects upon the cosmic play between the Sun and the atmosphere around the world. While a raag like the 'Gaud Malhar' is for a much intense form of the interplay between the raindrops itself.

However, it is definitely the 'Mian ki Malhar' raag which had managed to attract the maximum limelight amongst the rest. It is said that if the rhythmic movements on a tabla or a pakhawaj is coupled with the deep voice of a singer, it can produce the much-desired effect of rain and thunder within the soundscape of a raag.

If the monsoons were not so rare and far between, the music of our deserts would have been very different. The Manganiar community of Rajasthan boastfully holds one of the richest heritage of monsoon music in our country.

The Malhar based raagas of the Hindustani classical music finds a lot of variations, through the folk songs of Rajasthan. But that is not all, the monsoon raagas range beyond the usual and can foray into beautiful renditions like a Sorath, Sarang or a Desh and Mallari.

The music of Rajasthan is different in essence than the rest of the Indian monsoon music. Unlike the music of the mountains and the rivers, the Rajasthani music does not digress to the beauty of the topography so much. Rather the focus is mostly on the symbiosis between earth, water, and air.

A rendition of Baalam Ji Mhaara in a typical monsoon song of Rajasthan reflects more than just the longing for rain. It poignantly poses the plight of women waiting for their husband, an echoing semblance to the rain that never satiates the thirst of the burning soil.

It is interesting to note that the Indian style of music formation in these ragas have predominantly been an exercise of generating a family of an intensely thick atmosphere which is based upon the cadence of various tones, as opposed to the play of balance in harmony, often used in the Western music. Thus, the music of monsoon in India will ring forever like the music of the raindrops..

THE *'SOUND'* OF HUMAN BODY!

Bharat Verma, India's first body percussionist, talks about the art of producing sounds using one's own body, it's usage to elevate one's dynamics with his or her body and an emerging trend of body jamming sessions...

A distinct form of dance and rhythm, body percussion is principally performed in two ways: either by sitting at one place and using your body as drum or in the form of dance by moving around. Explaining the concept further, Bharat says, "Percussion in itself means creating musical rhythms and beats on instruments with the help of hands or sticks. Body percussion uses the same principle of creating rhythmic sounds, but the instruments become our own body parts such as the hands, legs, chests, arms etc. Anyone can beat their body parts and create sounds, but the difficult part comes in creating rhythms in a perfect tempo."

A South African form of musical communication, body percussion was originally used by slaves to pass on the messages through a combination of bodily vibrations such as stomps and slaps. The art comes with its set of benefits though. It stimulates control of movement, muscle strength, co-ordination, balance and helps in improving mental acumen by enhancing concentration, memory and perception.

The enriching attributes of body percussion make it for an ideal workout choice on its own or in combination with other techniques. Informs Bharat, "As per medical science, problems like blood pressure, eye weakness, and headaches can be controlled by pressing different parts of your palm. While doing Body Percussion one uses his/her palm mostly, and the pressure exerted henceforth increases blood circulation."

Besides regulating many diseases, body percussion, according to Bharat can be immensely therapeutic. Speaking on which, he says, "Many of my body percussion sets for instance involve portrayal of negative emotions, which have helped me to not only cope with them, but also overcome them after seeing things from different perspectives".

The beauty of any art is that it is bereft of boundaries. And, that quality of it provides a fertile base for cross-pollination of ideas and multi-disciplinary collaborations. Body percussion, for instance, can be coupled with several dance forms be it Salsa, Tap or Bharatnatyam. Its well-timed rhythms can complement an array of musical instruments too. Bharat feels that the rhythmic sound of body percussion can act as a backbone to any genre of musical piece. He adds, "Body percussion can be played solo or in group with or without music. If one wants to give variations then he or she can fuse music into it to make it more beautiful."

Bharat intends to explore collaborative aspect of body percussion by joining forces with a rapper, beat boxer and drummer. He tells me that one can even sing with body percussion and use human body as replacement of drum.

When I ask him about the trend of Human Jamming session, which basically, is group of people (body musicians) jamming to 'body percussion', he feels, "Body Percussion if performed in group would bring people closer and create an atmosphere of harmony and happiness. I am seeing that of late corporates are looking to explore such sessions to build up a healthy team environment."

Well, the beauty of body percussion is it can be done by people of all age groups from four to eighty. So, if you love music, dance, just go for it! Your body will thank you for this.

VINAY AGARWAL

YOHAAN PISSURLENKER

2019 - Overview

The yearly exhibition, PALM Expo, never seizes to put together a platform for a diverse display of latest live performance technology and world class Musicians.
The 19th year old Expo is known to bring together various enthusiasts from several regions of the world. Ranging from inventors, engineers, CEOs to Artists that breathed life into the tools made for the purpose of creating inspiring art.
The exhibition features a wide array of lighting systems, music instruments, high grade speakers, and even industrial mechanical components.
The exhibition was held at Bombay Exhibition Centre, that in spite of promising a staggering 445,109 sq. ft of meeting space received crowds in thousands. Although, booths in dedicated halls were spread strategically to maintain a smooth flow of visitors. Visitors consisting of traders, CEOs, Music enthusiasts, Artists, and tons of lollygaggers.

PALM is also known to show off equipment that is built for professionals in the various fields the exhibition engages in. From trying out the freshest pair of headphones to taking part in monitored live array rigging, PALM made sure there was something to keep your brains pulsating.
PALM had two areas dedicated for live performances by artists, hosted by the two super brands: Harman and Yamaha; each of the line ups had their own appeal. There were young artists performing alongside some greats such as Louis Banks. This diversity in music genre and levels of musicality was definitely inspiring if not intriguing to witness. A range of brands sold their products, mainly inclined towards, pro audio and lighting, music publications, and music production.

Although, at PALM Expo 2019, there were a few brands that found their very own sweet spot between the everyday consumer and industry's creators.
JBL's new family of studio monitors, NANO K series, targets the "pro-sumer". Ranging from 3 to 8 inched drivers across six models; these monitors are Bluetooth compatible and priced at more accessible rates for studio quality performance.
Georg Neumann, hailing from Berlin, introduced their first ever pair of headphones to the Indian market: the NDH 20. Providing studio grade headphones tailor made for an everyday listener.
Yamaha was proud to announce their latest keyboard, the "i500", that is fully assembled in India. "Built for India, Built in India" refers to the distinct sound palette in the keyboard that is similar to none. It features sounds and rhythms that are reminiscent of the different regions in India, complete with Ragas and Riyaz rountines.

Various stalls by music stores put together some "play rooms" for musicians who wanted to try out gear that isn't otherwise available for demonstration. A few artists from the industry, such as Warren Mendonsa, Karsh Kale, and Harshit Misra, were invited to jam at these stalls. It was a great display of the new avenues the advance in technology had to offer to creators.
Just like that, PALM pulled off the one of India's biggest international expositions, keeping their reputation alive

A Live Music Experience.

Although PALM, once again, proved themselves as one of the best exhibitors in the country, they also brought in a tasteful roaster of Musicians from around India. From bands like "The Fanculos" from Mumbai to "One Plate Idli". There were two main live music areas: Harman Live Arena and Yamaha Stage. Each of these rooms had their own vibrant sets of performances, none similar to the other. The masses at PALM Expo were treated with music that isn't easy to find over at weekend pubs or restaurants. Keep reading for gist of some of the bands performing all over the course of the 3 day exposition

Day One

One Plate Idli. (Harman Live Arena)

The sound of the band is reminiscent of the sounds of South India its roots lying in Carnatic music. The six-member band comprises Abhay Nayampally (Carnatic Guitar), Finix Ramdas (Violin), Ajay Jayanti (Violin), Shovon Mukherjee (Bass), Khwab Haria (Drums) and Viveick Rajagopalan (Composer, Mridangam and Kanjira). The band consists of soloists that led pieces featuring rich instruments like the Mridangam and Violins. They started off with sweet sounding melodies that instantly transferred the crowd to a place not so Mumbai. Their music was an invitation to a world of harmony and bliss. By the end of the set, One Plate Idli had definitely created an impact on everyone.

Lydian Nadhaswaram

One wouldn't be able to tell just how incredibly talented young Lydian is, that is, before he takes throne at the Drums. Lydian's recent achievement on winning the CBS talent show "The World's Best" only made him more popular in the mainstream media, although he has already made an impression on the Greats in the Music industry. In his performance, Lydian played a set of tracks over which he improvised. His sound is quite distinct and his choice of technique quite tasteful. At the end of the set, everyone was left either really inspired or intimidated.

Akriti Kakkar (Harman Live Arena)

Akriti knew exactly what she could do for the eager audience that swarmed in for that slot. They were enchanted by the tunes of Sufi and Bollywood that the band executed so well. Akriti reminded us of the true spirit of the classic Bollywood tunes that people would listen to in the 90s. After they were done performing, everyone was left with a bunch of tunes ringing in their heads.

Ranjit Barot and Gulraj Singh (Yamaha Stage)

Mumbai's very own Ranjit Barot 'kick' started his set with, talented keyboardist, Gulraj Singh featuring some of Yamahas flagship equipments. Ranjit showcased a library full of soundscapes that went beyond usual drum playing. Using inbuilt triggered sounds like sine waves and texturous percussion instruments. This would leave everyone, including Ranjit Barot, suprised. The band played a number of Indian fusion and funky grooves that could possibly keep the crowd grooving all evening.

Other than an experimental performance, Ranjit shared about his heart of young musicians that come from states outside Mumbai to just to play music for the love of it.

Niladri Kumar. (Harman Live Arena)

Niladri, with his sweet Sitar melodies, spun a mesmerizing tapestry of Indian fusion music. He was accompanied by his band that backed him up as he took each of the tunes with an improvised approach.

Although most of the songs we're deeply based in Raags and off beat Indian classical influences, the crowd was awestruck by their renditions.

Overall, Niladri delivered a very emotionally stirring performance that included a lot of crowd participation.

Day Two

Susmit Sen (Yamaha Stage)

Susmit Sen, put together a guitar led band. It was a rare sight as Susemet translated Indian Fusion classics using his acoustic guitar, and classical guitar techniques that only a few master in our time. He's setlist included songs that was a mixture of folk, Indian classical, and rock. The four piece band

sounded huge on the Yamaha stage and drew a crowd almost instantly.

The Darshan Joshi Collective. (Harman Live Arena)

Darshan Doshi curated some of the best musicians in Mumbai. Featuring Rhythm Shaw on electric guitar, Avishek Dey on bass, and Jarvis Menezez on keys. Their set featured heavy grooves and genres ranging from Jazz Funk, Indian Fusion, Jazz fusion. The band's chemistry was commendable as they locked in unison loves lines, and odd time signatures.

Louiz Banks and Gino. (Yamaha Stage)

Mr. Louiz Banks as always put up a display of his experience and knowledge as a musician. Accompanied by his band, Louiz put his own spin on Jazz based songs and improvisation was the key. He brought the show to the crowd using variations of trading musical parts, keeping the crowd on their toes.

Louiz and his boys played a smooth blend of genres like Acid Jazz, Jazz fusion, and Funk.

A. Sivamani, feat. R Bharat Brass Band and Stephen Devassy. (Harman Live Arena)

We all know that Sivamani has a reputation of blowing us away with the various set ups he collaborates with. This year it was with R Bharat Brass Band, a band of a world class sound that kicked off day 2.

The music was based on complex Indian Classical rhythms and vocals with an improvised tone. The collective sounded big and R Bharat gave us a spectacular view into a Big Bang set up, a rare sight in the Indian music scene.

Collect2 (Harman Live Arena)

Collect2 was another collective that was fresh to the Harman family. The 5 piece band featuring Charu Hariharan (multipercussion, mridangam), Shalini Mohan (bass guitar), Sreekanth Hariharan (vocals), Prashant (keys), and Rahitha Krishnadas (Chenda). This set up was often be led by Charu who would chant Indian Classical vocals while simultaneously playing multiple percussion instruments. If that wasn't enough, the rest of the soloists of the band would top that off with harmonious parts that would leave you stunned.

Day 3

The Fanculos (Harman Live Arena)

Ask anyone from PALM about which band was the most fun, and "The Fanculos" would be mostly be the answer. The energy from Ramon (trombone, vocals, keys,), the band leader, spilled off stage and on to the audience members the minute he spoke his first words of banter. The music played by the band members: Jehangir Jehangir(drums), Saurabh (bass), Rhys (saxophone) backed Ramon causing a deluge of contagious funky music in the Harman Live Arena. Though it was their first time at PALM Expo as a band, The Fanculos managed to make a direct connection with the people that evening with their groovy Ska based music.

Nush Lewis: (Harman Live Arena)

Nush Lewis brings something unusual to the table; a Harp. While being one of the two known Harpists in the Country, she is much more a popular in the Independent Music scene for her Harp/Piano playing, singing and song writing. Nush played at Harman Live with her 4 piece band consisting of Yohan Coutinho(bass), Linford Owen(drums) and Adiel Massar (multi instrument). Together they played a blend of alternative, pop, and ambient music. She's definitely an artist to look out for, you can find her performing in the local music scene. People were definitely tuning in to the easy-listen music that reached out to all kinds of ears.

Mame Khan's Rock n Roots Project: (Harman Live Arena)

Mame Khan and his Folk- Fusion Collective was the perfect set up to end the Grand Exhibition. Mame has already created an impression on a worldwide audience with his International performances and Coke Studio being one of the more popular stages for his work. The band played various renditions of Sufi and Bollywood tunes that the crowd participated in wholeheartedly. It was heart warming to watch Mame Khan and band play their music with such passion as it told stories of their world. In our interview, Mame was proud to say that Mumbai always has had a special place in his heart, and you could tell it was true.

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AN INSIGHT INTO

MELODICA

"Music is a theme,

That peps up every heart,

Irrespective of the nature and mood,

It is the best and favourite pass time of every human,

Regardless of age, religion, area,

It is boundless and leaves behind,

A bountiful feeling!"

Nature has gifted us with light and sound. Any living being understands the meaning of sounds and when words are added onto it, along with a definite rhythm it becomes a song. Music has no language and is understood by every spec of life on this universe. There are many musical instruments which produce soothing sounds namely piano, guitar, drums which are common. Melodica is an uncommon musical instrument available in plastic, wooden and other materials. There is a pipe to blow air like in harmonica and play the keyboard like the piano and hence has a keyboard, mouthpiece and a chamber for air. It can be used by children as well as adults. One uses two hands to play this instrument. At some places of the world wind is blown through pipe and the two hands are used to play the piano.

There are many types of melodica namely Soprano and Alto, Tenor and Bass melodicas. Soprano and Alto have high pitch and sound thin. They are played with left hand using black notes and right hand using white notes. Tenor are low pitched and in this the left hand is used to hold the bottom while the right hand plays the keyboard. Brass melodicas are uncommonly used. There are about forty-four keys and can be acoustic or electric type. The approximate cost of melodica varies from one thousand to five thousand rupees. Some of the players of the instrument in the world include Donald Fagen, Jon Batiste, Augustus Pablo, Damon Albarn, Mike Patton etc. The instrument is very popular in Japan and many other Asian countries.

It covers two or three octaves and may be light, small or portable in nature. It may have twenty-four, thirty-two, thirty-seven or forty-four keys. It was first invented in 1950s by Hohner.Similar instruments have existed in countries like Italy during the nineteenth Century. Melodica has some advantages namely it is light, portable, easy to learn and can be used in orchestra thereby making it popular among the younger lot for Jazz and pop music. Various bands like Oasis, Red Hot Chilli Peppers etc. have used it. Some songs Strawberry fields forever, Everything counts, Midnight Cowboy etc. have used the music of melodica and these songs have been recognized as classics.

The maintenance of melodica is simple. The moisture that gets collected from air pipe needs to be cleaned every time it is used. It is easy to exchange the reed plates also after they have been used up. It also needs a little bit of tuning after fitting them. The mechanism of cleaning is also simple. We just need to remove the screws of mouthpiece. In case it is of plastic we can wash it else blow it to remove the excess dust out of it. To conclude it is a very popular instrument for use at various musical bands.

SHASWATA KUNDU CHAUDHURI

Feeling the Blues
PART -1

Do you feel the blues? If yes, then you're part of millions across the world who feel it. And this is not the melancholic kind. It's the exhilarating kind! Right from Robert Johnson to John Mayer, with greats such as B.B. King, Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Buddy Guy and Eric Clapton packing the ages in between, the blues is one of the most contagious forms of music.

Starting out over a century back as the music of plantation workers in America, it has spread all over the world and is also the base for rock music. India too, has produced a lot of blues bands, spreading joy in bars and pubs across the country. However, very few bands have raised their heads above the rest with their take on the blues. They have imbibed the true essence of the music with their own tales replacing the struggles of the erstwhile slaves. Some of them are as follows:

1. Soulmate - This band from Shillong opened for Carlos Santana at Formula One Rocks in Delhi in 2012. Santana was so impressed that he had also joined them for a jam. Comprising guitarist and songwriter Rudy Wallang and front woman Tipriti 'Tips' Kharbangar, Soulmate has been gigging for 16 years and have three albums to their name – Shillong (2005), Moving On (2009) and Ten Stories Up (2013). The duo is backed by Rudy's sons Leon and Vincent on bass and drums respectively.

Now these rockers choose to live in the peaceful mountains rather than busy cities even though they easily can. They are reclusive to interviews and maintain an aura of mystery, befitting to the image of rock musicians. However, on stage, they are quite the opposite.

Tipriti gets absorbed into the songs like a spirit possessed and her powerful voice enraptures all. She is considered to be one of the best vocalists to have emerged from the North East and many female musicians in the country cite her to be their inspiration. Rudy, one of the best guitarists in the country, brings the house down with his mind numbing solos, artful fillers and driving rhythms. He had learnt his musical chops playing in The Great Society, band of the legendary Lou Majaw.

The rhythm section is solid, bearing all the brute force of the Rudy and Tipriti. They tour all over the country as well internationally. A Soulmate concert is a pure sonic treat.

2. Arinjoy Trio – These blues men from Kolkata are perhaps the most jovial musicians in the city. That reflects in the music, especially through onstage ribbing, where they mischievously play under-the-cover notes with grins at each other.

Vocalist and guitarist Arinjoy Sarkar's face contorts into several expressions of pure mirth as he bends the strings or floors sweet guitar licks as bassist Aakash Ganguly and drummer Sounak Roy provide a banging and rollicking rhythm section. The crowd imbibes their energetic vibes into their bodies and groove to the 12 bars, with occasional yells of pleasure.

They have also released their eponymous debut album in February this year at the prestigious Mahindra Blues Festival in Mumbai. The 7 track record is very much a tribute to the blues as it is a gritty and intense tale of life in 21st century urban India. Even though their music might make you dance in happiness, the underlying themes are stuff for the grey cells.

NEHITA ABRAHAM

10 TIPS TO HELP WITH SCALE PRACTICE

1. Create the Right Environment: Set up the right mental and physical atmosphere like a quiet room for concentration. Once you find a comfortable setting, stick with the choice you made.

Ensure that your environment meets your needs: Grab water, snacks, pens, notebooks, sheet music, highlighters, download a metronome app, a tuner, etc., in advance so that you're well prepared and uninterrupted from the get-go!

2. Tension Free Warm Up: Not only do we need to warm up our muscles to avoid injuries and get them moving, but we also need to warm up our bodies and minds to avoid stress and boredom. Ever yawned during a warm up? I know I have, because repeating the same warm-up technique is annoying!

So as essential as your warm-up is, don't get stuck with the same routine. Refresh your brain with different techniques like using dynamics (play it softly or loudly) and articulation (staccato,legato) or try to sight read for a change. Remember, find a gentle way to tell your body to be relaxed – lower your shoulders and loosen any part of the body that feels tight.

3. Have A Goal: When you start with a clear intention, you know where you stand and where you have to be in the future. So, write down your goal. If you're a beginner, you may need help with stiffness or singing without straining if you're a singer. Look for the right tutorials for that specific goal and in 6 months, your goal may totally change!

4. Practice Smarter, Not Longer: We've all been guilty of pushing our practice till the last minute because we find the work intimidating, especially if we have a large portion or a full song to do.

Practicing little by little and often will give you willpower and encouragement because your goal isn't this giant thing, it's smaller and realistic.

5. Speed Comes Later: A good practice session has these key elements:

- CLEAR ARTICULATION
- CORRECT NOTES
- THE RIGHT FINGERING

If you are a beginner or someone that can play scales confidently, there is always room for practicing slowly. Practicing to get every note totally even in volume, with the correct technique, at the same speed and the right fingering is the challenge. Once you get better, you can speed up but remember the 3 elements.

6. Identify Where You're Going Wrong and Fix It: It's easy to say we only have 15 - 30 mins and just power through the whole practice session even if we play wrong. Identify where and why you keep making the mistake and slow down to fix it. If keeping tempo is the problem, try clapping your hands or tapping your feet to the tempo alone, without worrying about performing the notes.

7. Right Frame of Mind: If you're not in the mood to practice, it's okay to take a day off instead of getting frustrated.

8. Flow Without Anxiety: It's always a good idea to take a second to pause when there is a fingering change while playing a scale. This reduces anxiety because the pressure to complete the scale in a hurried manner is removed. Start by playing the notes slowly, pause to change, and then continue.

9. Remember Why You Started: If you get overwhelmed, remember why you started learning. Go back to your first day and see the progress you've made and why. The same thing that motivated you back then, can motivate you now.

10. Reward: Play any piece of music you just want to jam to, after you're done. Ultimately, it's the joy from the sound of our instruments that we feel the most connected to. So, take off the pressure and have some fun!

Band of the month EASY WANDERLINGS

Picture credit: Nikita Borges

Tell us the story of how the band came together

Every time I look back I am thankful to all the forces that magically worked in bringing us together. Malay and I were college mates and we started Easy Wanderlings in 2015. We decided to record and release some of the music I had written in 2014. Then just when I needed a female vocalist for the song 'Enjoy it while it lasts', a voice that I was very particular about in my head, Malay said he knows one girl who sings well and then when she sang, I knew right then she's the one. No audition or a huge list of people to choose from, the first girl who came through the door with an angelic voice stole our hearts and took the crown. When we were recording the album, I had composed a portion with western flute, but had no clue where to find a western flautist in Pune. There was none. But a day later in café I see a little girl playing western flute. She and her family had moved back from the US. I couldn't believe it and we invited her to play with us on the album. So we launched 4 singles in different times of 2016 until NH7 Weekender invited us to perform at the festival and then we realized we need to form a legit band to perform. Through sheer luck and amazing friends we were introduced to the members who now make up the Easy Wanderlings. It's always been like that for us. In the nick of time things would all come together and which is why decided to call our debut album 'As written in the stars'.

In an age with lot of bands being born every other day, how do you ensure your music is always fresh and accepted by your audiences?

We make it a point to listen to all kinds of music, keep our ears fresh, be open to experimenting, have courage to push boundaries, try things that are out of the ordinary, yet keeping the essentials of what makes the sound of Easy Wanderlings. Collaboration is key too. Work with people who can bring out the best in you, indulge with each team member, listen to everyone's ideas and lastly to your own self.

What's your take on the Indie music scene in India and how do you think it can be better?

I think Indian Indie music scene is currently on a rising wave, more people are listening to it, thanks to platforms like Spotify, Saavn, OkListen and other initiatives that help push the music out to the people. A lot of youngsters are taking up music as a career, more people are using the studio and giving priority to the recording process to get high quality production. The number of music festivals have gone up. I am positive about the scene and believe that there is a lot of exciting stuff that can happen in the next 10 years.

Things can be better when more indie music is played on radio alongside popular film songs, that way, the gap between the indie music world and the film space decreases. There is a notion that Indie music is not up to the mark of film production quality, which is not always the case.

Tell us about your upcoming gigs and projects.

We will be launching two new songs later this year – Fireworks and Madeleine. We're going to combine these two songs together in an 11 minute long illustrated film.

Sennheiser XS Wireless Digital

A good connection doesn't require being tied down. Wireless means no obstacles, no distractions, just effortless audio, every time. As a liberating solution for the musician moving about on stage, or a convenient approach to practicing in the rehearsal room, XS Wireless Digital empowers your inner creativity by allowing you to roam free. Lose the cables but keep the connection.

XS Wireless Digital is like any classic romance, it's elegant to see, complex in theory, but intuitive in action. These might sound like strong words for a wireless solution to your audio needs, but like any love story, you know it when you experience it. It's an instant connection.

XS Wireless Digital is essentially a cable replacement. It works digitally, using a 2.4 GHz transmission to create a wireless peer-to-peer connection. With a simple touch of a button, step away from the cables and maintain a faithful connection. As a liberating solution for the musician moving about on stage, or a convenient approach to practicing in the rehearsal room, XS Wireless Digital empowers your inner creativity by allowing you to roam free. It means interacting with the crowd like you never have before and enables you to take your performance to the next level. It's the power to turn audio limitations into audio opportunities.

Frankly, it's a simple but versatile tool that means more than we've had the time to discover. What we do know is that it works, and if you're looking to change your relationship with cables and frequencies, then you need to try it out. Who knows? You might find you have an instant connection.

No more cables

A good connection doesn't require being tied down. Wireless means no obstacles, no distractions, just effortless audio, every time. Empower your performance with the ability to roam free; lose the cables but keep the connection.

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Peter Cat Recording Co

Bismillah Album Cover Art

When you create and play your music, is there one core idea/notion/sentiment that you hope your listeners take away from it?

Each song has a different sentiment it is meant to evoke. We are always hoping that comes across, be it something painful or hopeful.

What is the ideal emotional state for your creative peak?

Uncertainty

One would say that your lyrics dabble deeply with surrealism. Has there been any particular songwriter or any particular genre that has influenced such an innovative mode of writing?

It's hard to say. As a writer, working harder and harder towards finding the best way of expressing an emotion or idea, with simpler and fewer words is the real goal. Surrealism is a byproduct of hunting for them although sometimes words are selected on the basis of their musicality, as opposed to their literal meaning.

What are the various shifts and changes that your listener will experience as they listen to your new album Bismillah, and how different is it from your other albums like Sinema and Portrait of a Time?

This album seems more like a refinement of our previous sounds, rather than a leap into a new direction. It is certainly better produced by Robin and us. The quest for what we are still continues.

How does Suryakant Sawhney manage to strike a balance between the electronic/Bollywood fusion as Lifafa, and the jazz fusion along with the progressive nature of Peter Cat Recording Co.?

Everyone in the band has their own side projects which demand balancing such things. In Suryakant's case, perhaps the difference in languages allows him to maintain that balance in a slightly easier manner.

If you had to talk about your music to someone from another galaxy, how would you do so?

We would describe it as Earth music, bereft of cultural and national identity.

What is the worst thing about being creatively driven?

The eternal struggle between knowing what could make you money and where the beauty of what you are doing truly lies.

Can you name a series or film that would be the perfect fit for your music (as background score)?

We'll make such a series/film one day.

What reactions are you hoping to Bismillah?

$

Do you ever listen to your own music as recreation?

Most certainly not haha.

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AKARSH SHEKHAR

The **Sound Man,** The **Myth,** The **Legend**

Behind all your favourite songs, are sound or audio engineers that use technology to provide clarity and overall quality. These professionals work their magic behind the scenes by drawing from their hat of recording, mixing, reproducing and mastering.

A song consists of a series of moments which take us on a little journey. This can be credited to the sound engineer whose job is not only limited to the world of music. Sounds create drama, suspense, and emotions. Have you ever tried watching TV on mute? It produces almost no feelings and creates more confusion than anything else. A sound engineer's job on a film/ TV set is to design every second of every scene so carefully that we get the best ambiance required to trigger certain moods.

The sound of dry leaves rustling in the wind reminds you of the time you went to the park or stepped on fallen leaves on the way to school. A whistle during the opening scene of a basketball or football game tells you about the direction the story is going. Background sounds coming from a scene in an office will also subconsciously take you back to your work environment. All of this is the result of the mastery of a man (or woman) with a well-trained ear and knowledge of acoustics to deliver a well-produced sound to stimulate your brain via your ears.

Sound engineers don't only work for music and film. They are often the unsung heroes behind the one thing us music enthusiasts love to hear in our daily lives: Clarity or Quality.

The clear sound from a crisp mic in a conference room, radio, sport games or musical concerts, the quality of effects (fun, sad, suspense) found on television, theatre or computer games, and not to mention one of the most important roles, cutting out unwanted background noise, are all a part of a sound engineer's job.

Without knowing it, key moments we love to see in movies or love to hear in songs, are being carefully augmented to emotionally stimulate us. A good sound engineer will always try to find an ear bug or ear candy to keep the listener engaged. By subtly adding effects, as simple as adding a drum beat to a repeated part of the song, a sound engineer keeps the track fresh and makes you want to come back for multiple listens.

A sound engineer will work very closely with a producer as the producer holds the key responsibility with regards to the sound outcome. Although the sound engineer makes important decisions, the vision and direction of the artist and producer are important and must be kept in mind at all times. Every choice, ranging from the mics, placement, preamps, EQ, compression, reverb or auto-tune is a result of a well established goal since the song's inception. A friend of mine who is a producer, compared the role of a sound engineer who does mixing and mastering to how a biryani gets made:

"Mixing is like making raw biryani gravy, rice, and making sure every ingredient of the recipe is in its place. Mastering is cooking everything and adding final touches like the toppings with nuts. "

A sound engineer is crucial for both pre and post-production. Experienced engineers will be able to direct talent in movements and offer valuable advice regarding the best practices and location, while helping the producer with feedback and additional creative elements. They will also ensure that everything runs smoothly. As my producer friend says: "Never underestimate the importance of the sound man."

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Recording Carnatic Music

There are many articles and Youtube videos showing how to record great rock and roll music, String sessions, great sounding vocals etc. I would like to now explain my own techniques for producing top notch clarity in capturing carnatic music live sessions. This is my all-time favourite since I am myself a professional Mridhangam player.

First of all, we must have a comfortable space for the artiste to do a live recording session. The golden rule of Recording carnatic music is to record them live at the same time. Let me explain to you in detail. There would be four members in a session. For example let us consider the following. A vocalist, Violin player, Mridhangam (Percussion) player and then a Gatam artiste (Clay pot).

Generally, it's a good idea to make them sit with eye contact so that you can have that full coordination in your entire album. Some artistes prefer a click track and some don't prefer it. Now provide them with good headphone mix and do a good balance so that they get comfortable and have a feel of a live concert.

VOCALS:

For carnatic vocals, use any dynamic mic like the SM 58 or a condenser microphone to get a good tonal character from the artiste. If two artistes are sitting in the same room, then use a dynamic mic for minimal microphone leakage. But here the leakage between the mics is the big beauty of tracking live session. In fact, I prefer the Violin and the Vocal in the same room so that the Singer gets the full support from the Violin artiste.

VIOLIN:

Recording a violin can be a challenge as it has lots of harmonic content from low to high frequency. But here any microphone like the Dynamic or a condenser will do. I point the microphone about 5 to 6 inches away from the body hole above the bridge place so that you get the correct tone of the acoustic violin presence. Do not worry about the bleed from your vocal microphone. That blending of both Vocal and Violin is the beauty of recording the carnatic music. If you want to use a condenser mic, place it little far and not too close to the body as you will get the bow squeaking noise in your recordings.

MRIDANGAM:

For many years, I was using the SM57 Dynamic microphone on the Right side were the black patch is located and then a SM 58 on the Bass side of the Mridhangam. You can also use condenser microphone on the right side (Black Patch side) but to position about one foot away as the artistes have different hand strokes while playing it. If is too close, then they might knock the mic! The best position is to keep slightly off axis so that it captures the tone very nicely. On the Bass side, try using a kick drum mic like the AKG D112 or the Sennheiser MD 421 Dynamic mic for great low end punch to your recordings. I use the MD 421. If you want to use the condenser also its fine. But try to place it little far as the hand stroke if different for each player.

GATAM /KANJEERA/ MOORSING

For recording the Gatam, I prefer a SM 57 to give that sharp Attack of the instrument and then later tweak it on my mixing. The SM57 works so perfect for this instrument for its tonal value. For the Kanjeera, try to place the mic behind the instrument as you will get more details low frequency sound than on the front. Some prefer to place the mic on the front. But remember, the hollow resonance is at the back! The Moorsing is usually played in the mouth like a mouth organ. Use any Dynamic microphone like the SM 58 or SM 57, this should give you an good great sounding tone in your tracking.

Happy Tracking!

Author: L. Baba Prasad. He is the owner and chief Sound/Mix and Mastering Engineer at Digi Sound Studio. He also teaches Sound Engineering and Music Production courses. For more details, visit www.digisoundacademy.com

Picture credit: Mrudula, Digi Sound Studio

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Studio Tour

Ferris Wheel Studios

Tell us about the space

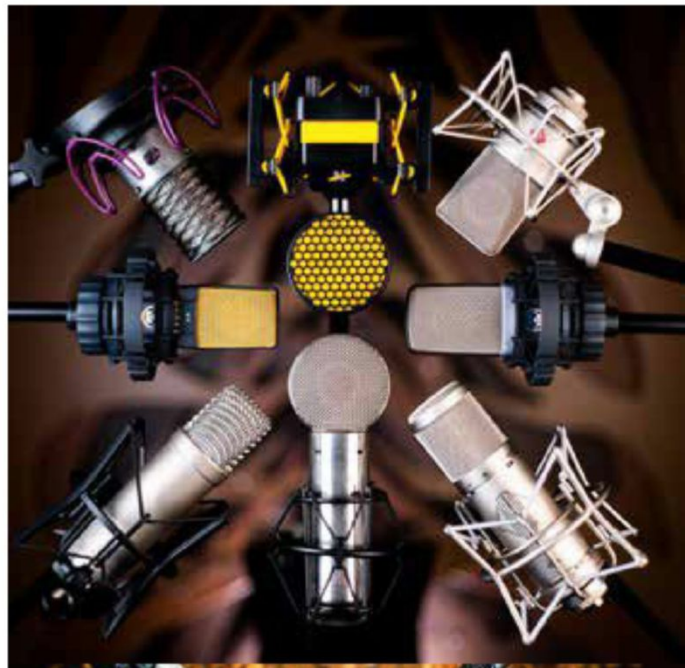
Ferris Wheel Studios is a recording space built specifically for musical endeavors. We have three studios in total. The way the studios are setup is rather unique and has sharing capabilities among each other to facilitate a live band recording with complete isolation between each instrument. There are 3 Control rooms and two isolated live rooms. Both isolated rooms can be patched to Control A and B. Control room B can double as a third isolated live room for Control room A if required. Control room C is a production suite specifically for electronic productions.

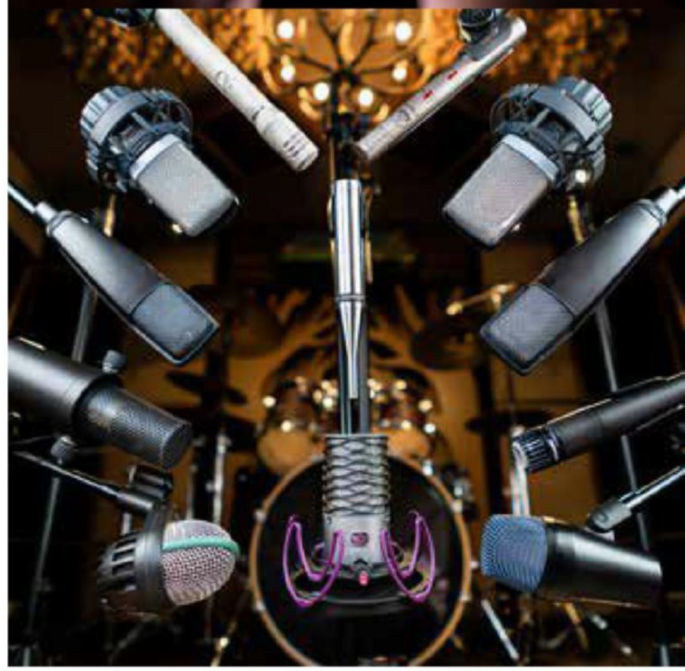
Take us through the process of setting up a recording

First we request the artist to bring a rough recording of the song. It can even be a phone video in a jampad. This gives us clarity on genre, length tempo and the artist intentions. We then set up a production and overdubbing plan. Since each drummer has his/her own setup and style of placement and it takes a bit of time setting up, we encourage the singer and other musicians to try out different mics and preamps in the other isolated live room while the drummers take their time. This productive utilization of time is key as studios are booked on hourly basis and this gives the artist to the opportunity to try different equipment without wasting time and making the best choice for their song. Once all mics and preamps are decided, we draw out a patchlist and begin micing and patching in the band. The DAW is fired up and we create the required tracks and monitor returns for everyone. Then it's just a matter of recording the performance.

What are some of the studio essentials you would recommend?

No Laptops. We always suggest investing in a desktop PC. It is always easy to upgrade later in stages and is much more reliable in terms of performance. A good audio interface. More inputs does not mean better. Understand your genre and needs. For someone who is looking to do a lot of electronic work, a simple Focusrite is good. But for someone who intends to record a majority of their arrangements, an interface with good clean preamps is good. Then comes the decision of number of inputs. Monitor speakers. Don't just buy what people recommend. Go and check them out yourself. It's easier said than done but since it is a considerable investment, finding a studio with the monitors you want to buy and booking it for 2 hrs so you can just play your favorite songs and judge by yourself is the best way to go about it. Also, expensive is not better. A lot of expensive monitors require the listening





space to very well treat. Let your ears guide you. A workhorse mic. Your first mic should be one that can record anything you can throw at it. A Shure SM58 and Rode NT1A are both great choices to start your career with. Treat your space. Never underestimate the importance of a well treated space. Even a simple bass trap goes a long way.

What equipment do you use?

Being a commercial studio requires us to be equipped with almost everything. From racks of audio interfaces and AD/DA converters to monitors, amps, outboard gear, controllers, mics and right down to the weirdest cable converters. Our main studio runs on the UAD Apollo system, Genelec and KRK monitoring, a selection of preamps from tube to solid state and some choice hardware compressors like Daking and WA76. For mics, we have a considerable collection of dynamics and condensers ready for any kind of sound source. For someone eager to get more details, our entire inventory can be found on our website and facebook page.

Pieces of gear you cannot live without

That's a hard one. Every song requires a different set of toys. But our favorite gear that makes us giddy with excitement when we use it are the Daking FET III, Goldmike SPL Tube Preamps, WA-EQP Tube Eq, Earthworks Mics and the Egnater Tweaker Guitar Amp. Oh! And we love our Genelecs.

Describe your work day

We start the day by flipping on our UPS and Genset Back up systems then testing them by momentarily flipping down the main power supply. After that we power up the Studio A workstation, interface, monitors, controllers and set up the buffer size depending on whether it's a mix day or a recording day. We then take a look at the photos and videos we took the day before and plan out our social media posts for the day. If it's a recording day, we plan out the production and begin the work as mentioned earlier. If it's a mix day, we start by prepping the mix, deciding which outboard gear we will use and patch them in. Then we play some reference tracks while we patch and look forward to the best part about this job.

Philosophy or reasoning behind gear choices

Many factors come into play when we are deciding to buy new gear. First and foremost, being in India, finding authorized service centers for a lot of pro audio brands is difficult. We consider the maintenance and repairs of the equipment before we take the plunge. Being a commercial studio, we have to think about the return on investments. Buying a Marshall JCM 4x12 is not exactly a smart choice even though it is a legendary amp, as not every artist coming in is a classic rock band. That would be a great choice for a classic rock band that is building their own studio. Versatility and build quality is important for us. Before we buy something, we ask ourselves, how many artists who come to us can use this? If we think that at least half of them would be excited to record with it, we go for it.

What's your next buy for the studio?

We just acquired the Earthworks DK7 Drumkit Mic system and we love the way it sounds. Clean and beautiful mics, amazing punch on the kick and snare and crystal clear overheads. These mics also respond exceptionally well to Equalization.

Tips to aspiring owners of studios

Choose your location wisely. Away from construction noise and in a well maintained building. Make sure you have a lounge or a chilling space, a kitchen and an outdoor area or a balcony. Start with minimum equipment and build your way up once the studio is in action. Invest in great quality cables and connectors and make your power signals clean and well earthed. Maintain an inventory of your gear and organize it well. Take your time. Draw out your plans and work out a sound business plan. Pun intended. It is a hard and demanding business. Most of all, never forget why you came here in the first place. For the Music!

BOSS INTRODUCES 200 SERIES EFFECT PEDALS

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With the 200 series, BOSS introduces a new generation of pedals delivering advanced sound and versatility in a streamlined footprint. The four models in the 200 series feature premium audio quality with 32-bit AD/DA, 32-bit internal processing, and 96 kHz sampling rate, plus support for additional control via external switches, an expression pedal, or MIDI. Grab-and-go controls and multi-function footswitches make operation fast and intuitive, while onboard memories allow users to store multiple setups for instant recall.

The DD-200 Digital Delay brings together sounds inherited from the flagship DD-500 into an even smaller package. Twelve modes offer delay colors from modern digital to classic analog, providing everything from basic echoes to rich ambient pads and everything in-between. There's also an independent looper that's always ready to use, plus a selectable carryover function for seamless transitions between memories.

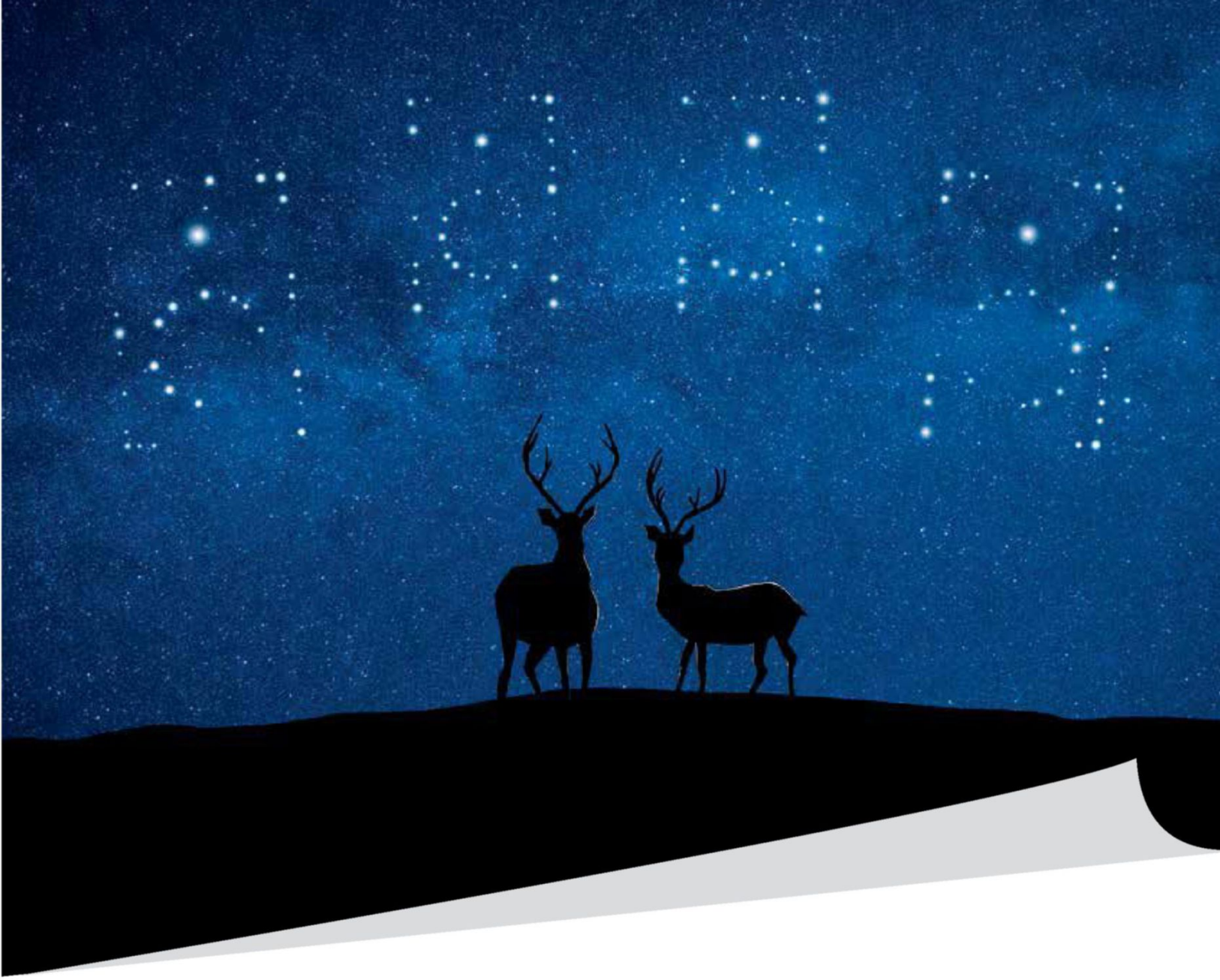
The EQ-200 Graphic Equalizer is a precision tone-shaping tool for guitar, bass, and other instruments, offering two wide-ranging 10-band EQ channels and a graphic display that shows the current EQ curve at a glance. Channels can be configured for stereo, parallel, or series operation, and it's possible to patch in external pedals for pre and post EQ shaping. The frequency centers of all 10 bands can also be set to three different types, optimizing performance for different applications.

The MD-200 Modulation provides an array of world-class mod effects in one small, convenient pedal. There are 12 modes to choose from, with direct panel access to rate, depth, and level plus up to three parameters tailored to each mode. Using the versatile insert function, players can patch in drive pedals and other effects for selectable pre or post processing.

The OD-200 Hybrid Drive brings next-level tone, feel, and flexibility to overdrive and distortion. Combining decades of BOSS tone expertise with innovative technologies, the OD-200 offers 12 unique modes, hybrid analog/digital circuitry, three-band EQ, and powerful pre and post boosts for detailed gain shaping. There's also an advanced gate circuit built in, ideal for eliminating noise and adding tightness to high-gain drive tones.

Equipped with MIDI I/O on mini TRS jacks, 200 series pedals provide support for advanced control while conserving pedalboard space. The optional BMIDI-5-35 is a 5 ft./1 m cable with an angled 3.5 mm TRS connector on one end and a standard 5-pin male MIDI connector on the other, allowing users to connect a 200 series pedal to nearly any MIDI-equipped device.

To learn more about the BOSS 200 series pedals, visit in.boss.info



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MAKING A SCENE

Slate Digital All Access Pass

GOODBYE EVERYTHING BUNDLE
HELLO, ALL ACCESS PASS!

Like it or loathe it, the software subscription model is here to stay and for many companies and users it is working really well.

In making the All Access Pass stand out from the crowd, Slate Digital have worked hard to not just offer a plug-in bundle but to offer the subscriber a complete music production training centre called 'The Slate Academy'.

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

Anyone who is already signed up to the Everything Bundle will be migrated to the All Access Pass and one of the best things about the AAP is that the price to the end user will stay the same at just $149 per year

New and existing subscribers will also continue to get all the Slate Digital analogue modelled plug-ins, in what is now being called the 'Virtual Analogue Bundle', and subscribers will continue to get all new plug-ins in this suite included, at no additional cost, as part of their subscription. In short that's over 60 top class plug-ins for less than your daily Costa Coffee bill!

What's New?

ANA 2.0 Synthesizer From Sonic Academy

new ANA 2.0 from Sonic Academy is very cool with some amazing tools to help even the most average of single finger keyboard player sound like they really know what they are doing

46 filter types and 24 built in effects

those of us who are not masters of the keys the amazing Chord Memory Device offers instant chords on single keys to make producing interesting sounding tracks faster and more intuitive.

ANA 2.0 also comes with over 500 presets, but the All Access Pass version adds another 300 presets created by top sound designers and programmers. You could almost call this the synth for people who don't do synths.

Overloud TH-U Slate Edition

so included in the Slate Digital All Access Pass is the Overloud TH-U Slate Edition Guitar Amps & FX Bundle, which gives you over 30 amazing sounding guitar amps and

cabinets, as well as dozens of effects pedals and modules that sound great on vocals, drums, and synths, and more.

Kilohearts Plug-In Suite -

The final plug-in addition to the All Access Pass. This incredible multi-effects suite features over 25 plug-ins that can be uniquely chained together to create your own custom audio processors. It also comes with featured plug-in presets created especially for All Access Pass subscribers

including some crazy multi-band distortion processors and many more. Kilohearts call this the 'Snapin Eco-system'.

The Slate Academy

launch of the Slate Academy, which all AAP members will have full access to.

The Slate Academy is designed to be the "industry's most innovative online production school taught by the biggest names in music and production".

Subscribers will be able to learn from industry heavyweights such as Chris Lord-Alge, Just Blaze, Cameron Cartee and many more.

200 video classes to start with, you'll learn production and mix techniques that will make your music sound better, faster.

With all Slate Academy courses, you not only get the multitrack session in your own DAW format, but also all the plug-ins, samples, and every last preset.

As an AAP member you will automatically have access to every new course as it becomes available with no additions fees or charges.

Having access to an ever growing stash of plug-ins is very useful, but knowing how to get the best from those plug-ins is really where we all start to grow as producers and mixers. Whether you're brand new to making music or a seasoned professional, the All Access Pass really does look like a fantastic way to get everything you need to make incredible sounding music and grow your audio skillset along the way. There's more good news as these days you don't even need an iLok as the Slate Digital plug-ins can all be authorised using iLok Cloud.

McDSP UNVEIL 6060

Channel Strip by McDSP

McDSP, in my opinion, makes some of the cleanest and smoothest plugins of the lot. They are among some of the pioneers in digital processing and still to this day, make some excellent plugins. They are often overlooked and underrated.

As a longtime fan of their 6030 Ultimate Compressor collection, I was quite excited for this one when it was announced earlier this year. The 6060 Ulti-mate Module Collection contains the largest collection of processing options of any module-based plug-in available. The 6060 includes over 30 unique modules for EQ, compression, saturation, distortion, specialized filtering, dynamic range expansion, gating, and more. Custom modules include bass optimized biasing for the larger than life low end, transformer-based tone shaping circuits for high-end shine, tape simulation, de-essing and new EQ and compression designs. Additional modules are already in the works.

The 6060 allows up to six modules to be operated at once. Modules can be arranged in any order and swapped on the fly using the module selector panel, or from the popup menu in each module. Any combination of mod-ules can even be split into two separate signal paths for some serious paral-lel processing.

The 6060 also includes updated compression algorithms not available in the 6050 Ultimate Channel Strip or the original 6030 Ultimate Compressor. Im-provements include feedback and feedforward processing, and the rare op-tion of negative compression on a few select modules.

The easy drag and drop style module auditioning is a breeze to use and is something I prefer over to the Slate VMR. The split mode operation for sep-arate signal paths allow for some very interesting parallel processing oppor-tunities and is something I would like to see in more module style plugins. The analog saturation modelling is easily one of the best. Its got the warmth with a highly minimized hint of the usual cold digital-ness that usually comes along with it. The plugin also runs at ultra-low latency and I've found it to be quite light even when running multiple instances of it in a session.

All in all, super excited to see the direction McDSP is taking with this. Would like to see a more affordable subscription model tied to it to make it a steal deal. Even otherwise, with the chances of more modules being added to this collection, it's quite worth it if you're a stickler for some extremely clean digi-tal processing

In conversation with Hisayoshi Matsui, General Manager & Rehan Siddiqui, Business Head- Yamaha Music Instruments India

Can you tell us about the new products launched at Palm Expo this year?

HM- We have few products as usual. One of the main products is the PSR i500 which is the first product coming from Yamaha's India factory. We have started the production late last year and this is the first product to be launched at Palm this year. The characteristic of this product, such as the sound, tone, style is as per the requirement of the Indian market. Compared to the previous models, our development team in Japan, ran a survey in India to find out what exactly is the tonal style required for India.

How has Palm Expo helped you reach out to your target audience?

HM- Palm Expo is a big opportunity for us to show our entire line up to our customers. Yamaha is the only manufacturer that produces all categories and this is a good opportunity for us especially in the city of Mumbai where western music is quite popular, we are able to showcase our best products.

You have a very good line up of artists for the Yamaha Arena this time. How do you choose artists for your performances?

HM- We try to choose people who endorse and are a face of Yamaha. We try to find out artists who can present our products in the right way. We also check their playing style with the products we have. This is how we find out the artists!

What does it take for artists to sign endorsements with Yamaha?

RS- For Yamaha, being a strong brand, artists want to be associated with us but there are some criteria that we follow. This totally depends from one product to another. For example- For synthesizer category, modx is a product we launched last year, and Stephan Devassy is our endorser for that product. We discuss with the artist and based on the product, decide on them and sign on with them.

Tell us about your new factory launched in Chennai, India

RS- It was a really a dream come true for us! We decided about it in 2015 and started work in 2017. On 27th May this year, we launched our PSR i500 to the Indian market. For the next quarter, we have guitars coming for the Indian market and in 2020 some PAs are going to come too. Our main objective through this is to enter the school market. We feel that music education is increasing and lot of schools have included music subjects in their curriculum. As Mr. Matsui has already mentioned, we have local sounds, voices and tones in our new product PSR i500, thus reaching out to local artists too apart from national ones.

Your message to our readers

We have been affiliated with the magazine for five years and we believe that they cater to all kinds of musicians and across the length and breadth of India and we would like to promote music in India through them.

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SENNHEISER

MUKESH AMARAN

ALBUM ARTicle

RUEBEN BHATTACHARYA

Visual Amnesia is Indian born artist Reuben Bhattacharya known for highly conceptual art in the rock and metal circles. Coming from a design background he forayed into the independent music scene when roped in by Rock Street Journal as Creative Head & Editor to design India's first full color rock glossy. Starting out as a musician and independent artist Visual Amnesia quickly became one of the pioneers of illustrated album art from India in the past 12 years. He has created art for Demonic Resurrection (Dashavatar), Bhayanak Maut(I Am Man, Pindakaas), Joint Family (Hotbox), 1833 AD (My Dark Symphony), Zygnema (What Makes Us Human Is Obsolete), Chaos (All Against All), Kryptos, Providence, BIG 69 Metal Festival, Bangalore Open Air and a host of bands and gigs from the subcontinent. Not to let only metal cred do the talking, Reuben also created art for Delhi electro rock artist Fuzzculture's debut 'NO' on Universal Records, Pune synthwave producer Dreamhour's debut 'VLLNS' on New Retro Wave Records and Melbourne synth producer Future Fate's futuristic album "Mechanism". Recent years saw him foray into the international metal scene by creating art and prints for Slipknot, Black Sabbath, Skyharbor, Monuments, Textures, Aliases, Allegaeon, Underside, Sleep Terror and more. Visual Amnesia is also the chief artist for Aussie metal icons Twelve Foot Ninja and handles all design duties for the band.

1. Tell us your experience with Dymbur and what you feel about their music?

- Dymbur have been working with me for a long time now and we have struck up a great friendship based on mutual respect and creativity. I was first commissioned a couple of years ago by the band, to design their logo based around the English meaning of the band name, which is "fig tree" to signify the band ideology. I work with a lot of bands in the tech / djent / prog metal space including some top names and it's refreshing to see these guys try and do something with their roots. In fact, it's that very same ideology that acted as a catalyst and led to "The Legend Of Thraat" dark fantasy folk tale for the new album.

2. What was the most challenging part about creating this artwork?

- The art itself is some of the most detailed work i have done, there's a lot of dense natural elements because its set in an ancient rainforest, a lot of intricate traditional inkwork and atmospheric feeling as well as fantastical characters to balance. The bigger challenge was coming up with the story and tie together the different shades of the album into a single concept album. We were dealing with songs written over lineup changes, older and newer material, there was a certain evolution in sound and ideas. I went back to my own childhood and the Khasi folktales and lore heard from my mother, grandmother and her ancestors. "The Legend Of Thraat" is a work of fiction of course, but it's rooted in these Ri-Khasi tales that have been passed through generations. I'm really proud that this first time that a band from the region has had the guts to go in this direction of reinventing its own folklore in a modern metal sphere. The mission was to set a new standard here.

3. What are some of the projects that you are involved in at the moment?

- Well, this is the only second Indian indie release i have been involved in this year. Mostly been busy with my regular gig of being the designer at Twelve Foot Ninja. There's album art coming out for Seattle tech-death act Sleep Terror (includes members of Animosity, Six Feet Under) few releases of some previously shelved stuff for a couple other bands that I often work with, plus a print for what is arguably the most shred heavy death metal release of this year on Metal Blade. What I'm also really excited for is my new art book set to come out later this year. Can't give away any more details but stay tuned on my Instagram for exclusive previews and releases.

AMOGH RAO

CASIO Privia PX-S series

As a gigging musician, one of the most painful parts of pre and post-show efforts is the burden of transporting massive keyboards, pianos, and equipment. The hack of carrying multiple MIDI keyboards around just to compensate for this discomfort has actually been around for quite some time in the live music scene. It is in situations like these that instruments like Privia really alleviate your troubles. There is always a long-standing debate about finding a balance of portability and minimalism with audio and build quality that doesn't sound like you bought your instrument from a gift shop. There have been several attempts to realize this balance from many brilliant companies, but few have nailed it as accurately as CASIO has with the new PX-S.

The PX-S really pushes the already impossible standards of fitting a grand piano into a tiny box, with dimensions that are 43% smaller than the previous generation Privia instruments, and has the world's smallest body. The buttons are all touch-controls without any protruding nobs, making the entire interface look like it belongs in the future. The instrument also runs on double-A batteries for up to four hours, great for those impromptu rehearsal sessions when you forget to pack your adapter. The hammer-action keys have been "smart" scaled, bringing down the dimensions of the octave range without changing the feel of where your fingers would fall on a grand piano and hence maintaining the same playing style. The keys also have an artificial ebony and ivory coating that makes the touch really pleasant regardless of the weather.

With a shape and body this size, you would expect the sound that comes from crammed speakers and poorly designed outlets. Fortunately, the sound of the Privia series has always been one of the best you can find in a digital piano. That being said, the S-series really takes it up a notch. Even complex harmonic relationships between the strings of a piano such as sympathetic string resonance have been perfectly mapped into the internal mechanisms of the digital back-end. CASIO has taken into consideration the actual requirements of their customer base and stuck to a small but significant library of sounds and effects instead of the multitude of samples and permutations you would find in most digital pianos. From a connectivity perspective, it also adds to the standard stereo, MIDI and USB combination with Bluetooth as well as CASIO's well known Chordana Play app. The app is available on both the Google Play Store as well as the iOS App Store and allows you to control every single aspect of the piano's features in depth, perfectly complementing the simple and minimalist approach to the functions on the body of the piano.

The S-series is a no brainer for any musician looking for portability and ease of use but is also well suited for beginners and players on a budget. Their price points are vastly better than any of their competitors for the same quality and standard of sound.

GIG CALENDAR

JULY 2019

DELHI

02-Jul	Incompatibles	The Pianoman Jazz Club, New Delhi
03-Jul	Funkatrix	The Pianoman Jazz Club, New Delhi
04-Jul	Anomaly Thursdays x Infuture ft Ape Echoes, Okedo & Sq. Feet	Auro, New Delhi
04-Jul	Thursday Live Ft. Janvi Anand	Hard Rock Café, New Delhi
04-Jul	Thursday Live ft. Nazm	Hard Rock Café, New Delhi
05-Jul	Jatayu	The Pianoman Jazz Club, New Delhi
05-Jul	Paradox x Kitty Su present Sevendoors	Kitty Su, New Delhi
06-Jul	MediumRare ft Andrea (Live) [IlianTape/DE]	Auro, New Delhi
11-Jul	Paradox presents Monkey Safari (Hommage/DE) & Vridian	Auro, New Delhi
13-Jul	Red Rack 'Em x Epic Vinyls From Brazil | Delhi	Auro, New Delhi
18-Jul	Mohit Mukhi	The Pianoman Jazz Club, New Delhi
21-Jul	Manfred Weinberger	The Pianoman Jazz Club, New Delhi
30-Jul	Ser O Duo (Chile, Southamerica)	The Pianoman Jazz Club, New Delhi

HYDERABAD

07-Jul	Sunday Unplugged - Shiv Menon	Hard Rock Café, Hyderabad

MUMBAI

04-Jul	Parvaaz Live	Flea Bazaar Café, Mumbai
11-Jul	KittySu Mumbai Presents : Innellea (Afterlife / Innervisions)	Kitty Su, Mumbai
11-Jul	Thursday Live ft. Krystal Waters	Hard Rock Café, Andheri
25-Jul	Thursday Live ft. Sidd and the Throwbacks	Hard Rock Café, Andheri
26-Jul	KittySu Mumbai presents : Emanuel Satie + Ana Lilia	Kitty Su, Mumbai
27-Jul	KittySu Mumbai presents : CC:Disco!	Kitty Su, Mumbai

BANGALORE

05-Jul	Sound Awake presents Siddharth Menon live	Fandom, Bangalore
10-Jul	Fandom presents Kelvikkuri & Mantalai	Fandom, Bangalore
12-Jul	Fandom presents Trash Talk + Flaw & Order	Fandom, Bangalore
13-Jul	Perfect Strangers - A Tribute to Journey & Toto	Bflat, Bangalore
13-Jul	Fandom presents Dance Central with Rohit Barker	Fandom, Bangalore
18-Jul	Thursday Night Live ft PerfeKt Pillows	Hard Rock Café, Bangalore

PUNE

18-Jul	RHCP Tribute - Jameer K Collective	Hard Rock Café, Pune
19-Jul	Khulle Naagde Tour Pune	Viman Nagar Social, Pune

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